

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick

Permanent WRAP URL:

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/122344>

Copyright and reuse:

This thesis is made available online and is protected by original copyright.

Please scroll down to view the document itself.

Please refer to the repository record for this item for information to help you to cite it.

Our policy information is available from the repository home page.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: wrap@warwick.ac.uk

An ethnography of Facebook and the production of values in a political campaign. *A study of the use of Facebook for the 2014 Frente Amplio national elections in Uruguay.*

By

Esteban Damiani

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Interdisciplinary Studies

University of Warwick, Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies.

Supervisors Professor Celia Lury

Associate Professor Nathaniel Tkacz

5 July 2018.

Table of contents

Introduction.....	1
Epigraph	1
Section 1 – Research questions and the object of study	3
Section 2 – Thesis structure	7
Section 3 – Research scope and contributions	9
 Chapter 1 – Understanding the use of Facebook and Frente Amplio in Uruguay	12
Epigraph	12
Introduction	16
Section 1 – Contextualising the political campaign in Uruguay.....	17
1.1 - A unique democracy in the Latin American region.....	17
1.2 - Frente Amplio: <i>the crystallisation of a left-wing coalition</i>	20
1.3 - The 2014 national elections and the ossification of a political structure	24
Section 2 – Introducing Facebook.....	27
2.1.1 - Facebook 2004 - 2014: <i>An unsettled giant</i>	27
2.1.2 - Facebook as a valuable service	33
2.2 - Facebook affordances for the creation of publics	34
2.2.1 - Personal Profile Pages	35
2.2.2 - Group Pages	36
2.2.3 - Event Pages	37
2.2.4 - Fan Pages.....	38
Section 3 – Facebook and the 2014 national elections	39
3.1 - Facebook: a platform for broadening opportunities	42
Conclusions	44
 Chapter 2 – Literature Review. Understanding previous approaches to online publics in political campaigns.....	47
Introduction	47

Section 1 – Defining online publics for the analysis of value production.....	49
1.1 - Social media, big data and Social Network Sites.....	49
1.2 - Productive Public and value creation.....	58
1.3 - Facebook as a space for measuring the public	64
Section 2 – Productive Publics and political campaigns: a <i>different dynamic in public involvement and political communication</i>	69
2.1 - The 2008 Obama campaign: a milestone in political communication	69
2.2 - SNS as political marketing tools for measuring the public.....	74
2.3 - Online media and populism	76
2.4 - Collective Identity and alternative forms of political participation	80
Section 3 – Defining the process of valuation	83
Conclusions	91
 Chapter 3 – Methodology. Designing an ethnographic approach	98
Introduction	98
Section 1 – Designing a strategy and defining the object of study: <i>an ethnographic approach to follow valuation practices</i>	100
Section 2 – The specificities of data collection and its results.....	107
Section 3 – Ethical considerations of participant-observation in a political campaign on Facebook	114
Conclusions – Reflecting on the scope, limitations and benefits of the ethnographic results	116
 Chapter 4 – Multiple forms of value in a political campaign.....	119
Epigraph	119
Introduction	119
Section 1 – Multiple forms of value	122
1.1.1 - Building up a news channel for a national campaign.....	122
1.1.2 - Promoting the FA campaign on the news.....	124
1.2 - The value of Facebook for professional campaigners: information management, paid advertisement and professional services	127
1.3 - Free advertisement for commercial value: <i>an undesirable intervention</i>	132
1.4 - Moral values.....	134
1.5 - Networks for Constanza Moreira: <i>an alternative project inside the FA</i>	136

Section 2 – Account Centred Value: analysing a dynamic of value production in a multivalent medium	144
Conclusions	147
 Chapter 5 – Audit Culture and the use of metrics in a professional campaign	151
Epigraph	151
Introduction	152
Section 1 – Understanding the public character of metrics for the FA campaign	154
Section 2 – Making valuations and decisions possible in an audit culture	160
2.1 – The popularisation of audit culture	168
Section 3 – Metrics’ performativity and multiple agencies in professional practices	172
3.1 – Building a public to excel in an audit culture	173
Conclusions	176
 Chapter 6 – Negotiating values on Facebook Groups	180
Epigraph	180
Introduction	182
Section 1 – Participation on Open Groups	184
1.1 – For a Frente Amplio Closer to the People: <i>Leadership and asymmetries in participation</i>	184
1.2 – Frente Amplio, Uruguay: Diversity in the biggest FA’s Group	190
Section 2 – Tensions in direct forms of participation	198
2.1 – Inter-pages tension	198
2.2 – Tension with user participations inside a Group	199
Section 3 – Framing a productive public in an Open Group: <i>A negotiation and demarcation of multiple views for participation</i>	205
Conclusions	211
 Conclusions	214
 References	222

Appendix I - List of Facebook pages	256
Appendix II - Weekly Report for the FA campaign	257
Appendix III - Research Participant Consent form.....	261
Appendix IV Project Information sheet	262
Appendix V Consent Form for Recording.....	264

Acknowledgements

This research would have not been possible without the contribution of some people who help me at different stages with my thesis and throughout my life as a PhD student. First and foremost, I am especially grateful to Professor Celia Lury and Associate Professor Nathaniel Tkacz for being incredible supportive supervisors. Professor Lury was the main supervisor and director of the British Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) awarded project, which has economically supported this research. She spent many hours reading drafts and providing great advice. She has been an exceptionally committed thesis supervisor and was always very sympathetic with my problems. I am also very grateful with Dr Tkacz who was patient with my work and generous with his expert advice in the study of participatory cultures.

I am especially grateful with Dr Cecilia Dinardi who read the introduction and Chapter 3, Ian Patrick who read Chapter 1, Harriet Thai who read chapter 2, and Strahil Anguelov who read chapter 4. They offered me their great friendship, proofread parts of this thesis and made useful suggestions.

Similarly, Associates Professors Sybille Lammes at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies also provided me with very valuable feedback and advice at the early stages of this thesis.

The Society for Latin American Studies (SLAS) also contributed with this research with a Postgraduate Travel Grant and partly funded the ethnographic fieldwork in Uruguay.

I am enormously grateful with all those who participated in this ethnographic experience and shared with me their extremely valuable and limited time in Uruguay during frantic campaign's activities. Research ethical rules advise me to preserve the anonymity of those who participated in this research and provided the fabric for this thesis. I wish I could give them something back and I hope they will be able read this thesis and find it to be an interesting contribution for the formation of a collective identity around the Frente Amplio. I will personally contact them to show my gratitude to them for their time generously given for this research.

Professor Emilio Cafassi has been a great friend with whom I spent several evenings talking about Uruguayan politics. I asked him many questions about Uruguayan politics and obtained great advice and

help to conduct this research in Montevideo. Isaura Fabra has also been a great friend who provide valuable information about the history, culture and everyday life in Uruguay.

I am also very grateful with many people who were part of the Goodenough College community. The college became a second home and shelter in the UK. Many friends gave me a great and unconditional hand when it was most needed. I am especially grateful to Dr Alan McCormack, Enrique Miranda, Dr Rodrigo Torres, Dr Alexandra Tzirkoti, Dr Nikelesh Sinha and Dr Fabio Tommasini, Pablo Perez Tirador, Celeste Gonzales, Mario Bernal, Naima Von Ritter, Claudia Derbez, Dr Giovanni Peralta, Martyna Kasprzyk-Peralta, Dr Hamish Moham and Dr Yoko Laurence. It is with great sadness that I can only remember Dr Stefania Barichello and recognise that is too late to say thanks to her. I will always treasure in my memory her immense love, company and understanding of how difficult and emotionally intense a doctoral path can be. Her story taught me about the importance of others in the process of undertaking a research programme and obtaining a PhD.

The company and love of Dr Victoria Alvarez provided me with the strength and hope that I need to continue with the often-lonely work of written up this thesis.

Lastly, this thesis would have not been possible without the support of my family. My father, Dr Osvaldo Damiani, and my mother, Dr Beatriz Zelcer, always encouraged me to continue and remind me about the importance of perseverance in life. My mother was also incredibly supportive in many ways including moral and economic help during the last months of the writing up process of this thesis.

Declaration

This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Interdisciplinary Studies. The research presented as part of this thesis has been composed by myself and has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree.

Esteban Damiani

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'ED', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

5 July 2018

Abstract

This thesis explores how and why Facebook became a valuable space for the 2014 political campaign of the Uruguayan Broad Front (Frente Amplio). The research focuses on the analysis of a distinctive form of value production led by users' participation that Adam Arvidsson and Nicolai Peitersen have conceptualised as *productive publics*. Similarly, the concept of *collective identity* proposed by Alberto Melucci allows the deconstruction of the processes whereby various actors establish and negotiate the boundaries, meanings and goals for their political group and the rest of society. The thesis pays especial attention to the measuring capacities of Facebook to develop three main conceptualisations and engage in debates on valuation and online media. In line with Celia Lury and Noortje Marres' analysis of the *multivalence* of online platforms, the first point considers the users' loose connections on *productive publics* and the coexistence of multiple interests as part of Facebook's assets for the production of value. A second point of concern is the popularisation and extension of what Wendy Espeland and Michael Sauder have described as an *audit culture* and the use of measuring devices for making constant valuation based on a general equivalent provided by Facebook. A third point of discussion concerns Erving Goffman's theory on frame analysis and Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot's theory on justifications to focus on the process of valuations of the public participation in a campaign. The thesis has found an academic gap in the ethnographic studies on the valuation of Facebook users' participation in a political campaign in Uruguay and contributes to those debates by analysing participant-observation data around the interactions on Facebook pages dedicated to the Frente Amplio.

Glossary

Facebook Comments: this refers to the users' action and the metrification of responses to an already existing post on Facebook via emoticons or text. As the Facebook Likes, the Facebook Comments are part of the embedded and constant feature actions facilitated by the site. The word is capitalised to indicate a distinction between the users' activity and its metrification and the regular English word.

Facebook Pages: is used to describe any type of Facebook site without considering the different type of pages that the platform offers.

Fan Page: a specific type of page which allows unlimited number of users to like and follow the page. Only users with unique rights provided by the page creator/administrator can publish new content. Facebook Pages are visible to any users and may allow comments on the content published if the administrator does not decide to block this option. Comments appears in smaller cases below the post published by the editors and are collapsed into a small window. This window can be enlarged if users click on the Comments link. This type of pages is unique in its capacity to generate advertisement and provide data about visits and users engagement with content.

FA: The Frente Amplio (Broad Front) usually called FA is the political coalition of several left-wing and centre left-wing parties which campaigns on Facebook and is the main focus of this thesis.

Group: a specific type of page that allows users to be included as members with rights to published and share content on Wall. The thesis has only studied Open Groups which show the list of members included in the group and published content to all Facebook users. In 2014 it was still possible to see content published on this type of pages without having a Facebook account.

Likes: this refers to the Facebook metrification of users' responses to a post or comment by clicking the Like Button on a page. The word is capitalised to make a distinction between the commonly used word and the Facebook metric and button.

Personal Page/Profile: a specific type of page that Facebook requires as an entry point to the site for all users and, in line with the company terms and conditions for using the service, it should be linked to an identifiable person.

Shares: this also refers to a Facebook button used to re-circulate content on other pages. The word is also capitalised to indicate this type of interactions on Facebook and the metrification of users' who clicked on this button.

Wall: is a basic feature of all Facebook pages and includes permalinks where content is permanently stored. The Wall is not the users' news feed that is constantly changing and showing posts created from accounts with which they are connected, but it is associated to one specific page on which content is posted and shared by users. They are able to post content or comments on the Wall depending on the type of Facebook Page and how the page administrator (this can be a Personal Profile, a Fan Page or a Group) sets up the page.

Introduction

Epigraph

Gabriel is seated in one of the sofas of his big office in the building of a large public organisation. He talks comfortably about his experience as a campaign advisor in the inner circle of the successfully elected new president. He ponders Facebook in relation to other media used during the campaign and translates his thought in a colloquial manner: “This was the first election in which the Frente Amplio [officially as a political party] said: we need to pay attention to social media. But, the online political campaign in Uruguay is still in nappies¹”. His phrase summarises the feelings and views on Facebook shared with political consultants such as Cristian (interview, 2014), Lorenzo (interview, 2014) or Pablo (interview, 2014); professional campaigners such as Daniel (interview, 2014) Paula (interview, 2014); party advisors like Patricio (interview, 2014) and Jorge (interview, 2014) and some politicians (Moreira, interview, 2014; Mieres, interview, 2014). Gabriel continues with his argument about the lack of knowledge in Uruguay about campaigning on Facebook “...What does it mean to have this number of likes? I don’t know (...) 200,000 Likes is a lot for Uruguay. Let me see how many Like has the Page of [He looks on the laptop at the Facebook page of the organisation that he directs]. The screen shows a number considerably lower than 200,000 fans.². “What can we do with this number of likes? I think none of us actually know”.

Then, Gabriel proposes a different explanation:

“Facebook provides something different. It allows people to feel part of the campaign, to spread enthusiasm (...) We have something that nobody else has; we have the Frenteamplista supporters who are unique in their motivations and efforts to support the party (...) We ask ourselves, what can we do to make people participate more? They are

¹ This is a common expression in Spanish to say that something is still immature and needs to be developed to reach its full capacity.

² The name of the organisation is not included to guarantee the interviewee’s confidentiality. Similarly, interviewees’ real names have been replaced by pseudonymous throughout this thesis.

showing their support, and Facebook is good for that. The Frenteamplistas Nets³ is the best example of how our supporters have taken this enthusiasm to the social media” (Gabriel, interview, 2014).

In a completely different setting, at an informal meeting of the Frenteamplistas Nets (Redes Frenteamplistas) in a traditional bar on Boulevard España, Matias (interview, 2014) seconds Gabriel’s thoughts on the party’s supporters: “they campaign independently, collaborate and raise the Frente Amplio’s flag with a conviction that no other parties around the world probably do”. To show the uniqueness of this form of participation, Matias adds: “when we organised the Frenteamplista meeting last year [2013], Manuel Castells⁴ was here. He was interested in trying to understand how we could maintain and carry on our activities without a formal organisation”.

Following up his comment on the scholar’s interest, Matias partially elaborates a description of how the Frenteamplistas Nets works:

“It is completely independent from the decisions and actions taken from the *orgánica*⁵. Some of the people who participate in the Nets are also members of the Party; and we also have contact with some party’s authorities, but we move in a completely different way (...) Everyone can propose an activity and if you agree with it, you join it (...) No one is going to tell you what you have to do. Here, everyone participates and gives their opinions because they want to (...) this is the space for every Frenteamplista (...) Many people do not understand it from outside (...) People participate and do things because they feel it, you need to experience it to understand it” (Matias, interview, 2014).

³ A multi-sectorial and extra party movement of supporters, which will be briefly introduced in the third section of the first chapter.

⁴ Manuel Castells is a famous professor in sociology. He was able to explain and synthesise some of the deep transformations created by the digitalisation of society in his book trilogy called ‘The information Age’ first published in 1996. This work provided him with a worldwide reputation and authoritative voice in the study of communication, production and form of organisation raised by digital technologies.

⁵ La *orgánica* (the Organic) was the term commonly used by FA members and supporters to refer to the official party structure and its institutional activities.

Section 1 – Research questions and the object of study.

The comments registered in the above epigraph are directly related to the main interest of this thesis in why a political community found participation on Facebook to be a valuable activity in the context of a national campaign. Similarly, the difficulties in understanding how a political group may persist on digital media without a formal structure might be related to the use of general theories, such as Castells' theorisations on power and communication to explaining a variety of diverse and complex phenomena with abstract principles. A hypothetical attempt to explain supporters' participation on Facebook as a form of domination embedded in institutions (Castells, 2009, p10) might generate what Segerberg and Bennett have considered as "analytical fallacies in the debate about social media and contentious politics of those analyses that subtracts the media from its complex contexts" (2011, p199-200). Such approach may miss fundamental components of people's interactions which move beyond the borders of institutions and are part of an open process on which actors enact and negotiate the meaning of actions (Goffman, 1986, p21).

Website-based services have also been analysed with political economy approaches (Fuchs, 2011; 2014; Arvidsson, 2004) to engage in debates about the possibilities of these technologies to make changes or maintain the status quo of societies in political and economic terms. These discussions respond to a research interests focused on the analysis of interactions as part of a capitalist form of organisation and economic exploitation of data, but they may not be especially useful for gaining a deeper understanding on the motivations of left-wing supporters who used this platform despite of considering it as a company pursuing capitalist interests (Ciudadana, interview, 2014; María, interview, 2014).

Similarly, the need for conceptualising the impact of digital media on society and politics may be considered as a response to a diverse range of general and academic interests, which earlier discussed the potential of the internet to enhance democracy and bring about political transformations (Anstead and Chadwick, 2009; Negroponte, 1995; Žižek, 2002) or as false libertarian promise (Morozov, 2011) with limited means for increasing political interest among a large disengaged sector of the population (Davis, 2010; Norris, 2001). A substantial part of these discussions on data and politics also involved the idea of surveillance in

their multiple forms carried by digital companies (Arvidsson, 2004) in collaboration with governments (Morozov, 2011; Fuchs 2014) and users (Albrechtslund, 2008; Jurgenson, 2010).

The debate on online political participation was renewed after the 2008 USA national elections when the Democrats encouraged their supporters to use Facebook, Youtube and Twitter to harness the power of online publics for promoting Barack Obama's campaign. The enthusiasm of millions of users on these platforms showed the power of digital technologies to create and disseminate content for campaigning and generate public support (Gibson and Ward, 2012; Levenshus, 2010; Vaccari, 2013). The hope that online media could generate grassroots movements and spread political engagement have been more recently considered in less optimistic fashion in relation to Brexit and Donald Trump's campaigns. Instead of a being considered as libertarian and democratic forms of participation, they are now been understood as suitable channels for *populist communication logics* (Engesser et al., 2017) that may endanger democratic notions such as pluralism and tolerance of diversity⁶.

This thesis proposes a deeper exploration and ethnographic study to understand how Facebook have become a valuable space for political groups. By analysing the practices around the use of Facebook pages dedicated to the Frente Amplio (FA), this thesis will contribute to the study of online cultures and the production of values during a campaign. In line with other studies (Gerbaudo 2016; Gerbaudo and Treré, 2015; Miller and Slater 2000; Miller 2011; Miller et al., 2016), this research considered essential to observe Facebook within a broader culture and a specific political context, where actors influence each other and use available discursive and cultural resources to make sense of their practices.

The analysis of users' participation on Facebook provided by this research may be useful to those interested in understanding the possibilities of using digital platforms to develop political initiatives and foster people's engagement. Similarly, this thesis will provide evidence that shows how Facebook was useful for certain practices and campaigners, and it analyses the possibilities and limitations of online media to facilitate users' political engagement. This analysis may provide political consultants, party officers and citizens interested

⁶ A brief description of this debates and the issues related to online political communication is included in the literature review chapter.

in online campaigns with a better understanding of the scope of Facebook for fostering civic engagement. But, this research has not aimed to explain the impact of Facebook in deciding electoral processes or influencing political systems. These interests are related to this research but outside the scope of a work aimed at understanding the specific practices whereby FA supporters found Facebook to be a meaningful space.

In this thesis, the analysis of participation and values is thesis not initially connected to predefined conceptualisations aimed at understanding how Facebook may help society become more open or democratic. Participation on Facebook was initially considered as part of what Jenkins generally defined as *participatory culture*⁷ (2006, p7; 2013) or the sharing of an interest on loose digital spaces with various levels of commitment, frequencies and length of interactions; and the activities of online users or *productive publics*, to use Arvidsson and Peitersen's (2013, px, p49) term, who contributed in their terms to develop a political project.

Ethnographies on political participation, analysis of online measuring and online public activities have all been previously undertaken, but the combination of these three fields may be considered part of what Barnard and Kreiss (2013, p2050) referred to as a gap in the academic study of online political practices. By bringing together elements of economic sociology, cultural studies and political cultural studies, the thesis did not intend to establish a specific theoretical framework but identify areas in which it could contribute to the analysis of valuation processes related to the users' involvement on Facebook.

On the one hand, the thesis addresses those research interests by engaging with sociological debates regarding how digital technologies and measuring devices have enabled the emergence of valuable information, which allow new possibilities to record the public's interactions and to repurpose that information for diverse practices and contexts (Savage and Burrows, 2007). Among others, Adkins and Lury (2012); Arvidsson (2011) and Lury and Marres (2015) analysed how the production of value related to the use of digital technologies is part of process involving measuring capacities and the multiple interests of users.

⁷ This term is considered and reviewed in the second chapter of this thesis.

Facebook's social buttons – such as the Like Button – provide users with a form of interacting with digitalised objects and issues (Gerlitz, 2013; Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013; Gerlitz and Lury, 2014; Grosser, 2014). They translate personal interactions into a uniform form of measuring the public's reactions to content in a way that allows comparisons and valuations based on the counting of users' clicks. These authors have already considered how a new economy emerged out of online media (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013; Kennedy et al., 2015), providing useful elements for this thesis, which are introduced in the second chapter.

Dewey's (1939) broad definition of valuation was useful to consider value creation as malleable processes applied to all kinds of objects and topics as part of the relations that individuals constantly build. Similarly, his approach to valuations acted as a reminder of the importance of considering the specific context and cultural views in which the calculation of means in relation to end occurs. Valuations have been considered as "situations within the life-activity of a person or group, [where] interests are so linked with one another that the valuation-capacity of any one is a function of the set to which it belongs" (Dewey, 1939, p19). In line with this idea, Stark's (2009) considerations of the multiple orders of worth and Lury and Mares (2015) conceptualisation of *multivalence* in production processes were considered useful for the analysis of Facebook *productive publics*. Similarly, Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006); Goffman's (1986) and Tkacz's (2015) analysis on discursive practices were important frameworks for observing the creation of value as part of a moving process involving conventions and regimens of justification enacted and defined by those practices on Facebook.

The idea of the emergence of an *audit culture* (Espeland and Sauder, 2007) is used as a link between the literature on digital metrics and the theories on valuation. This term suggests the proliferation of rankings and indices as prominent forms to guide the categorisation of actors, and justified decisions related to the creation of hierarchies in all kinds of spaces, from academic institutions to film critiques and from financial risk assessments to political influence. The inclusion of Facebook's metrics in valuation processes is a crucial component of this thesis and analysed as part of the popularisation of *audit culture* in the following chapters.

The work of Melucci (1995a) and the operationalization of *collective identity* in online political movements by Gerbaudo (2014; 2016) and Kavada (2015) also played a crucial role in informing the thesis about current debates around online political participation and identity-building processes. These authors have been especially useful for understanding identity as a collective process in which multiple actors simultaneously collaborate and clash around shared political interests.

Section 2 – Thesis structure

By stating the research aims, questions and ethnographic approach to the FA community, this introduction has already established the research interests that guide a specific research design, the theoretical choices and the discussions analysed in the following chapters. The eight sections of this thesis, including this introduction, are ordered to facilitate the reading of an ethnographic design and a narrative directly aimed at understanding how a *productive public* on Facebook became valuable for the FA political community.

The first chapter aims to introduce the object of study and describes it without going into the details of the analysis facilitated by concepts presented in following chapters. Facebook is considered in relation to the specific scenario of the 2014 Uruguayan national election and the FA political culture. In line with an ethnographic approach, the chapter also describes specificities of the Uruguayan society and the political culture in which Facebook has become a prominent medium for everyday interactions. Similarly, relevant Facebook's features for this research and the materialisation of specific Uruguayan practices are introduced here with the aim of providing a useful case to start thinking about FA supporters' use of this platform.

By reviewing existing literature on *productive publics*, the second chapter identifies a literature gap in the intersection of the fields of online political participation, online measurement and valuation theories. Conceptualisations from the fields of online media studies, political sociology and economic sociology were reviewed to inform the thesis on how valuation process and political campaigns have been previously understood. The chapter starts by reviewing the bibliography previously used to conceptualise online platforms and online publics. Diverse terms such as social media, big data, *Social Network Site* and *productive publics* are initially considered in relation to their fitness to describe practices on Facebook and

the thesis' interest and aim of analysing users' participations and valuations. Then, the chapter moves to the analysis of the 2008 Obama campaign – considered as milestone in online political communication – and ends the second section with more recent discussions of online populism and political mobilisation that have been able to re-introduce Melucci's (1995a) conceptualisation of *collective identity* as a constantly moving process, in the study of online political participation (Gerbaudo, 2014; Gerbaudo and Treré, 2015; Kavada, 2015; Milan, 2015). Finally, the chapter's third section introduces Dewey (1939), Boltanski and Thévenot (1999; 2006) and Goffman's (1986) theories on valuations and the analysis of the framing of actions.

The third chapter considers the methodological design and the approach taken to achieve the thesis' objectives. An ethnographic approach is presented as the most appropriate means for observing interactions in diverse spaces that cross online and offline media. Here, special attention was paid to elements of collaborative research used to gain access to the political community and the dual character of Facebook as both the means for data collection and an object of study in an ethnography of *productive publics*. Melucci's (1995a) procedural approach for analysing collective identity and Miller's (2011) ethnography on Facebook are considered as important guidelines to develop a useful methodological and epistemological framework. Similarly, the ethical implications of collaborative research with a political party during elections are also considered in the last section of this chapter.

The ethnographic exploration of the participation on Facebook starts in the fourth chapter, which describes the diverse forms of value recognised in the practices and discursive rationalisations of the actors involved in pages dedicated to the FA's campaign. The co-existence of multiple forms of value is related to Stark's (2009, p16); and Boltanski and Thévenot's analysis (2006) of multiple orders of worth in social interactions, and the idea of a *multivalence* (Lury and Marres, 2015) enacted by the actors' diverse practices and interests. This chapter focuses on how Facebook facilitated a complementary dynamic of collaboration and competition in the realisation of these co-existing various forms of value. And, it ends by proposing the term *Account Value Centre* to analyse the dynamic of value creation related to the platform's multiple use.

The fifth chapter focuses on Facebook's metrics and how they facilitated valuation processes conducted by professional campaigners working on the FA official Fan Page. To understand the valuation of online objects, Espeland and Sauder's (2007) definition of an *audit culture* is here re-considered and re-signified in the light of the observations of practices including Facebook's metrics. The creation of value is associated with the metrification of users' interactions as a form of public support. And, this form of understanding participation is considered in relation to the notion of competition and differences, suggested in the fourth chapter, to analyse the idea of asymmetries in actors' capacity of recognising and generate value.

The sixth chapter observes Facebook Groups to analyse the idea of a frame (Goffman, 1986) as a necessary practice involved in valuation process and the settling down of tensions. In line with Melucci's (1995a) conceptualisation of *collective identity*, value may be thought of as the process of creating a framework shared by a plurality of actors disputing and claiming the representation, ownership and actions related to the FA. By following Dewey's conceptualisation of valuation as a form of settling down tensions around ends and means, Facebook's metrics are analysed as part of the emergence of popular auditing of contents and users' performances.

The conclusion and final section of the thesis reviews the five main findings related to the creation of value by *productive publics* on Facebook. The first one is the coexistence of multiple purposes and forms of value which are in line with Lury and Mares' (2015) observations on the *multivalence* of online platforms. This was connected to the observation of a dual dynamic of collaboration and competition for the users' attentions suggested by the notion of Account Centred Value dynamic. A third point was related to the enactment of specific cognitive frames that allow individuals to recognise users' involvement as valuable. A fourth finding re-connected the thesis with its original goal of observing the popularisation of measuring devices as part of what may be considered an extension of the *audit culture* (Espeland and Sauder, 2007). In line with this idea, online metrics may be thought of as a lay form of evaluating political participation around topics proposed by the same users. As part of this dynamic and valuation processes, it was possible to observe a fifth point related to the differences and asymmetries around the actors' capacity to gain attention and support on Facebook.

Section 3 – Research scope and contributions

Part of the originality and limitations of this work come from the ethnographic interpretation of the researcher who has inquired into the object of study from different angles and made an effort to put into perspective his own ideas and the views of research participants. At no point does the knowledge created by this research claim to be universally applicable to other social contexts. The value of this approach is, to a significant extent, in the researcher's ability to familiarise and apprehend the culture (Kvale 1996; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) of the FA's supporters. Similarly, the findings are directly related to the researcher's experience in a specific context and limited time. The thesis aims to collaborate with other researchers studying similar topics and with those interested in the FA and political participation on Facebook. Some of the observations and ideas produced by this thesis may be useful to inspire further reflections on the use of online media for political campaigns, but the final conclusions may not be applicable to other contexts, which may require in-depth analysis of other types of interactions for understanding their unique characteristics and practices. One of the most significant contributions to those fields of study will come from the detailed ethnographic analysis and the possibility of analysing the unsettled nature of the value generated on Facebook Groups and Fan Pages. By observing the tensions and ambiguities generated around users' participation on Facebook, the thesis provides the necessary material to deconstruct and analyse users' abilities to make and negotiate the meaning of interactions as part of *productive publics*.

By considering the work of Arvidsson and Peitersen (2013), Gerlitz and Helmond (2013) and Gerlitz and Lury (2014), this research developed an interest in studying metrics' contributions to the objectification and substantiation of value generated around users' interactions on Facebook. That interest has been developed by an ethnographic approach that contributes to the understanding of how users may incorporate those metrics in relation to their own possibilities and interests for political campaigning. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), Dewey (1939), Goffman (1986) and Melucci (1995a) have been useful analytical references to observe how value was generated in practices that required discursive frames in action, consensus and the

enforcement of rules and principles materialised in certain actions such as pinned post on a Facebook group, discussions on Facebook groups or removing content and users.

The choice of Facebook as the platform to study political participation was the result of considering its popular usage around the world and Uruguay (Grupo Radar, 2014; 2015; 2016). Facebook is a unique platform to observe online publics as part of a large phenomenon involving content production and users' interactions that go beyond geographical borders and can be escalated to different types of public engagements. An initial idea to include Twitter in the analysis was discarded due to its limited usage in Uruguay and consequent relative unimportance to understand popular participatory experience that this thesis defined as one of its main research interests. Most people in Uruguay did not use Twitter. But Facebook was massively used and fitted better the thesis' aim of studying the popularisation of an *audit culture* and online metrics.

The ethnographic approach to political participation on Facebook in Uruguay will also contribute to close an existing gap in the academic literature that has mainly focused on northern hemisphere countries without exploring political issues in Latin America where this online space has become a very popular form of interacting and sharing political content. In line with Miller and Slater's (2000) and Miller et al.'s (2016) ethnographic studies, this thesis considered it necessary to explore specific local culture and political circumstances to provide a better understanding of the unique and different forms in which Facebook has become entangled in a distinctive political history, practices and communications.

Chapter 1 – Understanding the use of Facebook and Frente Amplio in Uruguay.

Epigraph

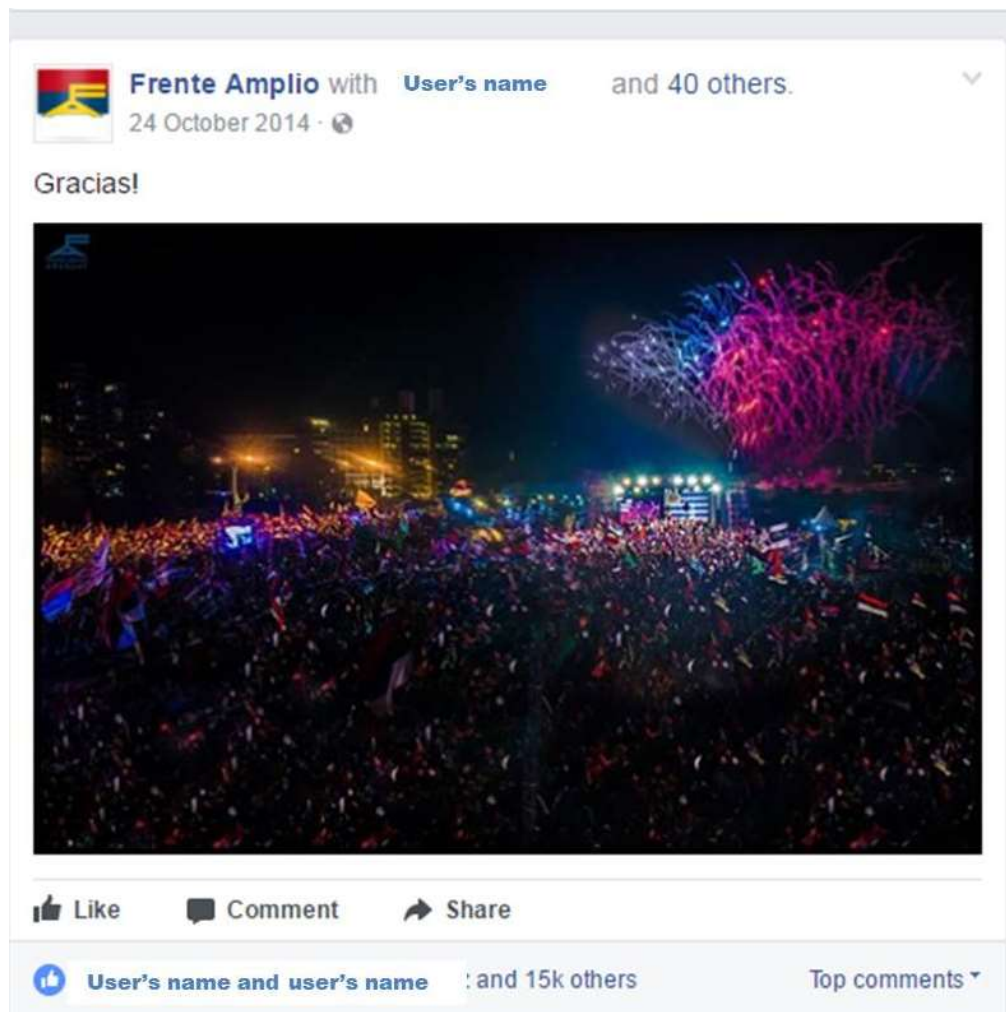
After several months of struggle with internal discussion inside the FA and adverse polls, the massive demonstration on 23 October 2014 was praised by the party and thousands of users on Facebook as the perfect way of closing the campaign. Just three days before the national elections, the party claimed to have gathered around 300,000 supporters (Montevideo Portal, 2014a) on the river bank avenue – La Rambla. Such a massive demonstration had not been seen before in the 2014 campaign. People and cars overflowed by many blocks around La Rambla and Boulevard Artigas in what was portrayed as a tricoloured festivity of FA flags. The pictures quickly circulated from photographers to campaigners and from one media team to another.

The massive attendance was seen by party members as a sign of a possible future victory (Daniel, interview, 2014; Gabriel, interview, 2014; Mariela, interview, 2014; Paula, interview, 2014). One of these pictures clearly captured the sentiment of enthusiasm at the end of an event closed with a triumphalist speech, fireworks and the great Río de la Plata in the background⁸. The picture was chosen by the FA team of Communication and Propaganda to portray the massive event and spread a message of happiness and victory among supporters on its Facebook page⁹. The word “Gracias!” accompanied the image to acknowledge a feeling of gratefulness for the massive public support.

⁸ The Río de la Plata is the widest river in the world that directly flows into the South Atlantic Ocean. Given its immensity and direct view towards open waters, Uruguayans usually refer to it as the sea.

⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/FrenteAmplioOficial/photos/a.324516474230837.99599.292074670808351/952186904797121/?type=1&theatre>.

Figure 1: Picture of the FA closing campaign act on 23 October 2014 posted on the party's Facebook page



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/FrenteAmplioOficial/photos/>

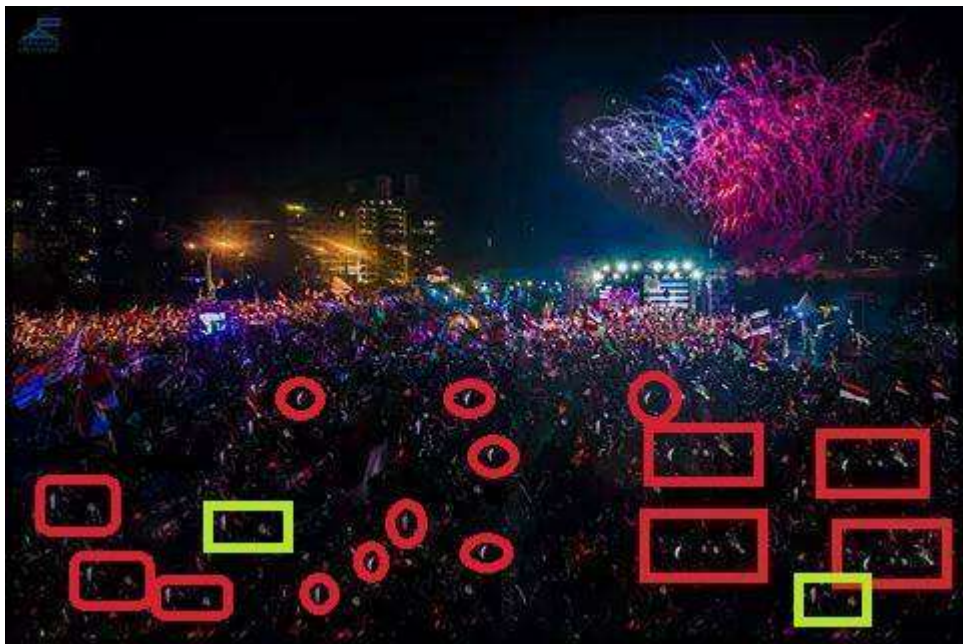
Facebook added an extra layer where supporters could magnify the collective enthusiasm and re-signified and hope for a victory on Sunday 26 October with their personal views. For many people, their involvement with the FA was connected to personal histories that, in some cases, could be traced by political affiliations made before the FA's creation in 1971. Some supporters were involved in politics with a strong passion that some Uruguayan compared to the intense feelings of football fans. They celebrated the picture as evidence of a once-in-a-life time event, and some of them even used it as cover image on their own Facebook Personal Accounts.

A supporter made an emotional comment on the picture with a direct reference to the Sunday national election:

"I was with my girlfriend in the gaucho¹⁰ on 26/03/1971. I was at the door of Seregni's¹¹ flat in March 1984, we were already married. We were always there, and we cried and celebrated with the FA. Today we were moved again in the Rambla ... On Saturday we celebrated 42 years of wedded ... We look forward to have another joy on Sunday!!!" (FA supporter, 2014 on FA's Facebook Fan Page).

But, something else was also added on this extra layer that Facebook provided for digital interactions. The party supporters did not notice or comment on the alterations made on the above image, but the changes made on a software for image illustration did not escape the attentive eyes of campaigners and trained media professionals in the opposition. They showed that black areas of the image had been covered with other sections copied from the same picture.

Figure 2: Picture with areas modified with Photoshop marked by the opposition



A public debate was created by comments on media outlets that portrayed the picture as an attempt to deceive voters. Some people even made memes to say that the demonstration had few people. But, many images and witnesses actually showed the massive attendance in the demonstration. The main issue was related to the dissemination forged information from the official FA's Fan Page and its team. By using the

¹⁰ The Gaucho is an iconic monument of a rural inhabitant or gaucho in the centre of Montevideo.

¹¹ Liber Seregni was a charismatic founder of the Frente Amplio who was imprisoned and tortured by the last Uruguayan dictatorship. His release in 1984 generated a spontaneous and massive congregation outside his flat on Artigas Boulevard. The event was considered a symbol of the return of democracy.

hashtag #Mentira (#Lie), supporters of the opposition tried to escalate this issue and said that the party lacked moral values and was based on lies – a common accusation used throughout their campaign.

Facebook had been suddenly transformed from a channel for campaigning to a medium for a potential scandal generated by the inappropriate use of an image. Who was responsible, and what was the need to upload this image? Was the campaign's aim of showing a larger number of supporters in a beautiful picture more important than the basically ethical value of truthfulness? Many FA followers were actually ashamed of how their party had used the image and posed these questions on the party's Facebook page.

The FA's National Commission officially recognised this as a careless mistake caused by the need to show images fast for the media coverage and explained that the image had been sent to them by someone who was not part of team (Mariela, interview, 2014, Daniel, interview, 2014). Having made the mistake, the tactic then was to apologise once and try to minimise the issue to move on as quickly as possible.

This "silly mistake", as some supporters wrote on FA Fan Page, did not change the feeling of those who deeply identified with the FA. Their views and comments were rooted in personal histories and family identities passed from one generation to another (Moreira, 2009). The feeling of belonging to a bigger political family, working together to achieve a common interest, was founded on shared activities with classmates, colleagues in trade unions and neighbours in street rallies and activities. A digitally modified picture posted on Facebook could not easily change the votes of those who associated the party and the results of election with their identity and a community to which they belonged. To continue together for the party's victory and the people's rights was a non-negotiable mission or jeopardised by a silly mistake. The electoral result on the 26 October was good for the FA that gained the majority of seats in both legislative chambers. The people identified with the party and their leaders went out to the streets to dance, drink and celebrate in masses as if a football team would have crowed as national champion by popular decision.

Introduction

The above comment posted by a supporter on the FA Fan Page is only one of the many examples on how memories, views and feelings blended in a process of personal identification with a party and its political campaign. These comments were related to their need and desire to achieve a political goal considered as part of a personal and a collective project. These experiences were immersed in a broad culture and specific circumstances that this research considers necessary to comprehend for understanding how and why FA supporters found participated on Facebook. Their needs and interests could not be summarised and simplified by their evident desire to win the national elections on the 26 October 2014. Those who were interviewed for this research showed and talked about a deep process of socialization created through the interactions with others. They shared histories, feeling and political discussion that constituted a process of creating a *collective identity* (Melucci, 1995a) in which the use of common language, symbols and ideas were crucial to provide individuals with the opportunity to become part of a group.

In line with an ethnographic approach, this chapter has the aim of introducing the readers to the cultural reservoir observed on the users' interventions on the Facebook pages to be analysed in the following chapters. Their capacity to make valuations on the campaign and public's participation needs to be considered in relation to Uruguay's unique civic life and the FA's political culture and rich repertoire of symbols. This first section of this chapter starts by localising this culture in a broad context of the 2014 Uruguayan national election and the FA. Supporters and members of the party praised participation in relation to specific values such as courage, honesty, democracy or revolutionary cause or the possibility to defend left-wing policies with the intellectual arguments that were gained as part of process of socialisation in local committees, debates at bars, family dinners and discussion about readings at political seminars that help to build up that cultural reservoir.

The chapter's second section describes Facebook and some of its features that will be relevant to understand the multiple possible uses of the platform that allowed the creation of *productive publics* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013). Two elements considered especially relevant to analyse the production of value on Facebook are related to its massive adoption of the users' ability to connect with others around

specific pages. Similarly, the metrics created around the use of social buttons such as the Like or Share are presented as crucial components included in the valuation of public participation on Facebook.

The third and final section describes a previous experience in the use of Facebook for political participation that is useful to illustrate how Facebook facilitated political involvement outside the party's formal spaces. This section introduces and analyses the Redes Frenteamplistas (Broad Front's Networks) as a specific case considered as an important precedent of FA supporters' practices on Facebook and a materialisation of part of the FA culture on this specific platform. The example is used to explain a specific dynamic of participation observed in the eventual circumstance of national elections.

Section 1 – Contextualising the political campaign in Uruguay

Section 1.1 - A unique democracy in the Latin American region

La República Oriental del Uruguay, where the fieldwork for this research took place, received its name from its geographical location at the east of the Uruguay River. This river is mentioned in the very beginning of the 1830 Uruguay's first constitution as a natural boundary with Argentina placed at the west of the country. Similarly, a reference to the 1828 Peace Convention between the Argentinean Union of Provinces¹² and the Empire of Brazil is made to recognise the sovereignty of the new country and prevent future territorial claims from those two countries. The agreement mediated by the British Empire (Nahum, 2004a, p27-8) – strongly associated with the commercial interests of local elites – did not considered a clear border to the south of Brazil (Nahum, 2004a, p29), but located the country's territory in between the Atlantic Ocean and the east bank of the Uruguay River, which continues over the Rio de la Plata River that demarcates the southern borders with Argentina¹³ and ends in the Atlantic Ocean.

¹² The political leaders of the Argentina confederation of provinces started an independence process in the Southern Spanish colonies and self-declared as the natural inheritors of the domains of the Spanish Kingdom truncated by the Napoleons conquest. However, the Uruguayan territories was not only considered part of the previous Spanish Viceroyalty of the River Silver, but it was also claimed by the Portuguese and latter by the Empire of Brazil.

¹³ Brazil and Argentina, then, became the two historic Uruguayan neighbouring countries and principal economic associates.

Figure 3: Geographical localisation of Uruguay in the Southeast of South America and the world.



Source: <http://www.qsl.net/cx8abf/uy/mapamundi.jpg> and Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE, 2014).

After the Uruguayan independence, the city of Montevideo became the country's capital and continued concentrating the wealth produced by agricultural exportation and the administrative and urban functions that occupied most of the country's professionals. The geopolitical position of the port city and its close commercial and political relationships with European metropolises provided Montevideo with a prominent place in the oriental lands of the former Spanish Viceroy of Rio de la Plata (Nahum, 2004a, p36). The city continued a historical trend and its urban area concentrated 40.0% of a relatively small total population of 3,440,157 inhabitants in 2013 (INE, 2014).

The beginnings of the Uruguay sovereignty was associated with the model of a modern republic stated in the articles 13 and 18 of the 1830 constitution. Originally, this representative democracy only allowed a small subgroup of educated people to vote and was strongly influenced by charismatic leaders, or caudillos¹⁴, who usually questioned the others' legitimacy and frequently resolved and intensified disputes with military action (D'Alesandro 1994, p11). In agreement with the educational requirement established by that first text, the

¹⁴ Caudillos were leaders associated with a local identity and recognised by their charismatic attributes such as courage, astuteness, and especially skills in diverse arts that necessary included political negotiations and military knowledge. They were seen as especially talented people who could better represent the people's interests. Among their followers were the gauchos associated with a culture of free spirit which involved a mixed behaviour involving hunting, temporary rural paid talks, nomad patterns and unregistered and illegal activities which could involve stealing cattle (Gari, 2015; Nahum, 2004, p37). They were usually armed, used to have a harsh life and recruited by caudillos under promises of better life conditions or/and specific favours. Caudillos such as Fructuoso Rivera and State forces were not exclusive identities and caudillos became national leaders after defeating their political and military rivals (Nahum, 2004, p42).

majority of people did not have the right to vote and depended on the favours and political position of caudillos who might have represented their interests (Nahum, 2004a, p41). According to Nahum (2004a, p37, p42-3), the beginnings of the country's political configuration and identity was associated with a sense of belonging to groups organised around those charismatic leaders.

Similarly, the origins of the two Uruguayan traditional parties' names – the Red-coloured Party and National or White Party – were historically associated with the colours of laces and flags used to distinguish themselves in the battle of Carpintería in 1836 (Nahum, 2004a, p43; Chasqueti and Buquet, 2004, p223). These parties and their identifying colours persisted across time and the term 'pink' – mentioned on the Facebook pages analysed in this thesis – refers to the more recent unification of the Whites and Red-Coloured parties into an electoral alliance to stop the FA's electoral advance of the. Supporters used this term to portray these traditional parties as representatives of the status-quo, which may have different colours, but described part of a similar right-wing model with traditional strong vertical hierarchies.

Nowadays Uruguay has an exceptional stable and healthy democracy and civic culture (Chasqueti and Buquet, 2004, p241, p243; Latinobarómetro, 1996; 2005; 2011; 2014; Moreira, 2009 p5). And, the 2014 UN Global study on E-Governance placed Uruguay in the top three positions worldwide related to e-participation and in the first place among the Latin American and Caribbean regarding e-governance (La República, 2014; Norris et al., 2015).

However, those reports cannot ignore the interruption to the democratic system in 1973 and the persistence of authoritarian and personalism style of leadership as part of the Uruguayan culture and history¹⁵. The attributes of those charismatic leaders have changed across the time, but Moreira (2009, p30) consider that the high levels of political participation in Uruguay may still be associated with the identification of voters with strong personal leadership. In 2014, supporters of the FA Senator Constanza Moreira, described her alternative candidature and emergence of a brand new political force with the neologism of Constanzismo.

¹⁵ The country has suffered two coup d'états in its history. The first was in 1933 and restored elections a year later in unusual circumstances that guaranteed the continuation of a president who had led the coup. The second coup d'état was in a context characterised by political radicalisation and established a violent period of dictatorship between 1973 and 1984.

The FA claims to be based on a democratic process and congress, but part of its culture and terminologies make references to charismatic leaderships and the importance of personal figures for starting and leading political actions. The FA shows the co-existence of a political programme with very charismatic leaders (Moreira, 2008, p49) such as Tabaré Vázquez, or José Mujica who were usually sanctified by some followers on Facebook posts. During this research, it was possible to observe how supporters have accepted the need of stronger leadership to foster political participation and popular representation. They may have wanted a more direct form of participation and decisions made on internal political debates inside the party. But, they recognised that charismatic leaders followed by people were required for gaining the public support.

The latent authoritarianism in the Uruguayan culture became evident with the 1973 coup that imposed ideas and interrupted democracy until 1984. Censorship, armed confrontations, kidnaping, torture, execution and exile marked a sad period that involved to a different degree all Uruguayan and especially marked left-wing supporters (de Giorgi, 2011, p35, p44). The FA was banned and prosecuted by the military regime and the resistance against the dictatorship unified activists against a common enemy (de Giorgi, 2013, p62, p98). In 2014, political leaders such as Macarena Gelman advocated the investigation of crimes committed during the 1973-84 dictatorship.

The recognition of universal human rights was part of the core common identity of the FA and directly connected to opposition to the 2014 Red-Coloured presidential candidate – son of the dictator Bordaberry. He campaigned for lowering the minimum legal age for criminal conviction in the national referendum voted on the same day of the general election. By aligning behind the vote for a negative ballot paper, FA supporters claimed to oppose Red-Coloured party and those conservative and authoritarian groups accused of trying to criminalise the younger and most vulnerable group of the population.

Section 1.2 - Frente Amplio: the crystallisation of left-wing coalition.

D'Alesandro (1994, p7) opens his book about the history of the Uruguayan left by describing the FA as the unequivocal space for the broad spectrum of left-wing groups in the country. He also mentions the difficulty of defining what the left is after observing the diversity of ideologies and practices inside the FA. The FA's

vague self-definition as a coalition of progressive political forces united against oligarchy and imperialism (Frente Amplio, 2016; 2017) fits well with Mascitelli's (1985, p224) general conceptualisation of the left as the organisations who proclaim the need for social transformation and opposed the conservative plans of status quo groups. However, D'Alessandro (1994, p8) and de Giorgi (2011) considered this definition imprecise and inadequate to analyse the changes in the left that allowed the creation of the FA in 1971.

The increasing popularity of the party has been associated with the population discontent and the economic crisis started in the second half of the 20th century. Chasqueti and Buquet (2004, p242) related a growing feeling of pessimism to the inefficiency of the two traditional parties to continue with a process of industrialisation and welfare policies that guaranteed certain standard of living in the context of the two World Wars. According to Moreira (2008, p49), the image of the traditional parties as exclusive representatives of well-off minority interests, and their inability to cope with the demands of middle income groups contributed to an exodus of voters from those parties to the FA and its centre-left-wing proposal.

The creation of the Broad Front, or Frente Amplio (FA) in Spanish, may be defined as an electoral alliance that embraced a change in the methods to achieve social transformations. The 1960s were characterised by radical methods that associated the left with the guerrilla (Demasi, 2014, p24). These methods and political views were strongly influenced by the Cold War scenario and the Latin American example of the Cuban Revolution as a local example of successful revolutionary struggles. But, the FA started changing this position at beginning of the 1970s and gathered diverse organisations and notorious people around a peaceful electoral option. Trade unions, the Socialist Party, Communists Party, the Democrat Christian Party, the Revolutionary Worker's Party, some politicians from the traditional Red-coloured Party and the National Party supported and artists and non-politically-affiliated personalities such as the General Liber Seregni, agreed on the need for a new political force to change the country (Frente Amplio, 2016). The creation of the FA was related to the decision of abandoning violent actions and moving from compartmentalised and isolated groups to a unified centred position that re-founded the left and proposed the use of institutional democratic channels as the main political strategy.

This process was not exempt from internal tensions that still exist inside the FA (de Giorgi, 2013; Moreira, 2008; Moreira, 2009). The emergence of an alternative presidential candidature inside the FA (briefly described in chapter four) in June 2014 partially reflects what Moreira (2008, p48-9) already defined as a division between moderate sectors and groups with more radical left-wing positions. The increasing tensions may be associated with the discontent of some groups with the lack of significant social and economic transformation achieved by the FA governments consecutively elected since 2004.

Despite the recognition of a strong civic culture and democracy by political reports on Uruguay, Chasquetti and Buquet (2004, p241) noticed an increasing level of political apathy associated with the discomfort of large middle-income groups and the leaders' incapacity to cope with their demands. Similarly, this thesis' researcher also noticed the inequalities between the more deprived areas of the north of the city and the wealthier southern¹⁶ areas and the commonly used word "plancha"¹⁷ to describe marginal groups. The term was regularly associated with increasing levels of crime and insecurity that were reinforced by a media coverage and a political opposition campaigning against the FA's government.

To understand the complexity, diversity and divisions inside the FA, Melucci's (1995a, p44) definition of *collective identity* as a process for establishing a lasting unity in constant tension is useful. This term suggests that a conceptualisation of the FA may be better comprehended if it is considered as the moving interactions of different actors who are constantly participating in its production and delimitation. The difficulties in achieving a conceptualisation for the FA is partially related to the lack of academic studies and professional documentation on the party's history (de Giorgi, 2011, p1). Similarly, the FA cannot be thought of as a homogenous organisation (de Giorgi, 2013, p61-2), but as the convergence of different views and political groups that understood the need of creating a common political front to achieve their goals.

¹⁶ The neighbourhood of El Prado associated with the old country houses developed by the traditional aristocracy may be thought as an exception to this geographical disposition of deprived areas.

¹⁷ Plancha is an informal adjective incorporated in the everyday Uruguayan lexicon that may be translated in English as flat. Ciudadana and Edna who were interviewed for this thesis, guessed that the term might be related to the cultural flatness of those called planchas. They lack study or formal occupation and are considered as people with unclear ethical codes. Their limited resources and precarious position contribute to their marginalisation from certain social circles and groups.

By 2014 there were 41 political groups¹⁸ inside the FA that did not resign their own political identity, interests and internal logics to justifying an independent life and actions. Their positions were supported by local discussions, influential leaders and a corpus of literature that included classic Marxist texts and less orthodox authors such as Luxembourg, Kaustky, Trosky, Mao or Mandel (de Giorgi, 2011, p39) as well as local authors who reconsidered Latin American situations and inspirational figures such as Ernesto Che Guevara, Regis Debry, Manuel Artigas or Aparicio Saravia. Their names and histories were commonly used in a narrative associated with the emancipation of Uruguay and revolutionary claims. These names provided the different groups with conceptual tools for claiming the representation of the people and a common language to find ideological converging points to create the FA.

The process of becoming a more responsible and authoritative members of the Uruguayan Communist Party (PC), was directly associated with gaining a good knowledge of Marxists political economy theory and the capacity to articulate those concepts in the analysis of international and local events (de Giorgi, 2011, p51-7). Some members of the PC understood that the most important thing was to have a well-thought line of argument before speaking publicly. For them, saying something spontaneously without a clear analysis was considered detrimental and against the intellectual capital that each member was supposed to have (de Giorgi, 2011, p59). Members of the Socialist Party also considered the ability to use political concepts as a requirement for having a valid discussion on public issues (de Giorgi, 2011, p93).

For other groups such as National Liberation Movement Tupamaros, progressive people coming for traditional parties or trade unions did not consider essential to illustrate members on classic Marxist texts. For them, valuable contributions were not necessarily related to education or rhetorical abilities, but to

¹⁸ These group in alphabetical order were: Agrupación 13 de diciembre, Agrupación Resistir, Alianza Progresista, Alternativa Frenteamplista, Asamblea Uruguay, Avanzada Frenteamplista, Baluarte Progresista, Banderas de Liber, Brazo Libertador, Cabildo 1813, Claveles Rojos, Columna Progresista, Compromiso Frenteamplista, Corriente de Acción y Pensamiento-Libertad, Corriente de Integración, Frenteamplista de Maldonado, Corriente de Izquierda, De Frente, Espacio Celeste, Frente Liber Seregñi, Frente Unido, Frenteamplismo Auténtico, Frenteamplistas por un cambio, Grupo Atabaque, Ir, Izquierda Abierta, Izquierda en marcha, Izquierda Unida de Durazno, Magnolia, Movimiento Alternativa Socialista, Movimiento Cambio Frenteamplista, Movimiento de Integración Alternativo, Movimiento de Integración Frenteamplista, Movimiento de Participación Popular, Nuevo Espacio, PAIS, Partido Comunista, Partido Obrero Revolucionario, Partido por la Victoria del Pueblo, Partido Socialista, Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, Vertiente Artiguista.

commitment to direct actions for obtaining tangible results on the street, factories, political negotiations or armed confrontations. Loyalty, unrestricted devotion for other members and political causes and fierce opposition to the enemy was, for some of them, more important than having a deep knowledge of left-wing authors (de Giorgi, 2011). For the radical revolutionary movements as well as for moderate groups aimed at negotiating a better deal within existing institutions, an intellectual discussion or ideal views without a direct action could be seen as a waste of time.

All the different parties that composed the FA had more or less sophisticated mechanisms to evaluate their performances and means to achieve goals. And the FA could also be thought part of a valuation on the needed of a political coalition for achieving results. Party members were used to evaluate their actions in term of performances with specific benefits, cost and desired achievements. They counted how many of the party's magazines had sold and targeted number of people to convince about voting for the party. They were committed with other party members to go to specific events in political congresses, trade unions, university meetings, street demonstrations and to campaign publicly for the party. For many supporters, the campaigning on Facebook (analysed on chapter four to six) was not an exception to this logic of calculations applied to their electoral goals (Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Jimena, interview, 2014; Gabriel, interview, 2014; Moreira, interview, 2014).

The FA has returned to the electoral life with the restauration of democracy in 1984 after being banned by the dictatorship in 1973, and it was seen as a hope for a change for many peoples. In 1989 obtained its first electoral victory in the city of Montevideo. Since then the capital of the country and the most important urban centre became a left-wing stronghold ruled by the political coalition. But, the party continued receiving more political support and in 2004 was able to win the presidential race for first time. This achievement was repeated in 2009, and in 2014 the FA was still ruling the country under Mujica's government.

Section 1.3 – The 2014 national elections and the ossification of a political structure.

The 2014 electoral calendar was defined by the constitution and the Uruguayan electoral body, Corte Electoral. Political parties aiming at competing for the presidency needed to hold internal elections by 1st June 2014 (Corte Electoral, 2014c). By September 2013, the FA had two pre-candidates: Tabaré Vázquez

and Constanza Moreira. The candidature of Vázquez was formally supported by the biggest and most influential parties inside the FA since the beginning of the electoral discussion and Moreira's candidature started later as extra-officially on Facebook as part of supporters' initiative discussed in the fourth chapter. This later candidature is the earlier case study by this thesis and it is especially relevant because it started on Facebook before any official decisions was made about her nomination.

The day for the national elections was set for the 26 October 2014 and demanded the vote of all 2,620,791 Uruguayan citizens of 18 years old or more (Corte Electoral, 2014a). On this same day, three separate ballot papers were presented for the electorate's decision. Citizens voted for 1) the country's president and vice-president, 2) candidates for the lower and upper legislative chambers (99 members of the Deputies' Chamber and 30 senators' seats) (Férmendez, 2014) and 3) a plebiscite about lowering the minimum age for criminal prosecution.

The electoral code established a ballottage system whereby a second round for deciding the presidency was required if none of the candidates could reach more than 50 percent of all casted votes. On 26 October 2014, none of the seven parties¹⁹ were able to obtain this absolute majority; and a second and final round for the presidency between the FA and the National Party was run on the 30 November. This last Sunday of November 2014 defined the end of the electoral race and a temporary limit for the interaction and political participation studied by this thesis.

One of the indicators used to evaluate the party's performance, mentioned in the previous subsection, were the electoral polls considered to monitor the campaign and forecast potential scenarios. Polls from various research agencies indicated that the electoral goal of the FA could have been compromised by the alliance of the White and the Red-coloured parties (Equipos, 2014a; Bottinelli, 2014; Montevideo Portal; 2014b).

¹⁹ These seven parties were: 1) the Frente Amplio with Tabaré Vázquez as president and Raúl Sendic as Vice-president, 2) the National Party with formula Luis Lacalle Pou and Jorge Larrañaga, 3) The Colour-Red Party with Pedro Bordaberry and Germán Coutinho, 4) the Independent Party with Pablo Mieres and Conrado Ramos, 5) the Popular Assembly Party with Gonzalo Abella and Gustavo López Lavignasse, 6) The Worker's Party with Rafael Fernández and Andrea Revuelta, and 7) the Intransigent Radical Ecologist Party with Cesar Enrique Vega and Hugo Álvarez.

According to those polls, the National party could have reached the ballotage and won the elections with the support of the other traditional party. The doubt about the chances of the party to reach a third consecutive mandate was considered by some supporters as a symptom of lack of interest from party's members. One of the reasons given for this was related to lack of opportunities to participate in decisions and policies made by the government.

The FA's local committees were thought to be the place where supporters could participate and discuss the party's policies, but they were portrayed by own members as ageing and decaying spaces which lacked new ideas and young members (Ciudadana, interview, 2014; Pedro, interview, 2014). Similarly, Jimena (interview, 2014), a long-standing member of the Communist Party, described the committees as empty spaces:

“After the 2004 elections, Tabaré Vázquez has said: Thanks guys, you can go, we are now in charge (...) the local committees, which are the place where the government supposed to have a direct contact with the basis were emptied (...) People don't participate because the Frente Amplio committees have become the same as the Red-Coloured and Whites. They are opened for a few months when the elections are and that's it (...) I am not happy, I want to have a popular government with local committees where the basis are included and ideological discussion take place”.

In a context where local committees were already seen as irrelevant spaces, some people actively sought alternative spaces for participation and political discussions. Trostchansky, a prominent figure associated with FA said: “the base committee has already ended its useful cycle, it is necessary to generate a new structure and way of thinking. We need to have the courage of breaking [the old] paradigm” (Trostchansky in Roizen and Melendrez, 2014). Facebook could be thought of as an alternative space, where the production and circulation of information was hardly controlled by a party or single actor. The platform allowed a different form of campaigning, where citizens, supporters and political organizations mingled in a network made by diverse types of users who gathered around the same interests.

Section 2 – Introducing Facebook.

Section 2.1.1 – Facebook 2004 - 2014: *An unsettled giant*.

A preliminary definition of Facebook²⁰ can be found in the conceptualisation of *Social Network Sites* (SNS) provided by boyd and Ellison (2008). SNS has been widely recognised (Miller, et al., 2016, p9-10) as a useful general description of “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile [or page] within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system” (boyd and Ellison, 2008, p211)²¹. These pages allow users to connect with others and communicate what Wilson et al. (2012, p214) consider self-relevant information in and for a network of users.

Relevance may be explained in relation to what Mark Zuckerberg (in Kirkpatrick, 2010, p217, p219) describes as the “core value of Facebook” or the simple fact that information is provided by recognisable users who were chosen to be as part of a meaningful connections. Similarly, relevance may be also related to content distribution defined by the coding of software and the Social Graph algorithms that considers connections with content and users to sort what is to be shown. Here, it is important to mention that paid advertisements on Facebook clearly challenges the idea of impartiality in the distribution of information. Content might be displayed because a user has the economic resources to pay advertisements. Said this, relevance is also defined by users who provide information about what they like and connected with via social the buttons provided by Facebook.

However, defining Facebook and users’ participation also requires considering its constant changes and the complexity generated by its multiple levels to operate with information and communications. These changes are both quantitative and qualitative and can be observe since its beginning in February 2004 when Harvard University’s students launched Thefacebook (boyd and Ellison, 2008, p218). By then, the site was only available to people with an email account registered under the harvard.edu domain (Cassidy, 2006) and mostly adopted by a relative homogenous social group of undergraduate students who wanted to stay in

²⁰ A discussion of different possible conceptualisation of Facebook is provided in the next chapter.

²¹ The brackets in the quoted text here and all quotes are added by the author of this thesis.

contact with friends and know more about other students. By September 2005, it had quickly expanded to hundreds of educational institutions in the USA, acquired the domain Facebook.com and considered as an incredible promising start-up (Kirkpatrick, 2010, chapter 6, p145). By September 2006, its users had expanded exponentially around the world, including Uruguay (Cassidy, 2006). And, by the end of 2014, when this thesis' fieldwork was conducted, the website announced having 890 million daily active users and a total of 1.39 billion who accessed the site at least one a month²² (Facebook, 2015).

Facebook was unanimously recognised as the worldwide most used SNS (Kramer et al., 2014, p8788) available in over 70 languages (Wilson, et al., 2012, p206)²³ with a large majority of users (82.4%) located outside the US and Canada. The services may be considered as one of the SNS that survived a period of users' constant migration from one site to another. It achieved a privilege position that left behind the technical difficulties of fast exponential growing, financial insecurities and many competitors. And it has been able to centralise people's attention and time spent online²⁴ in the world, South America and Uruguay.

The massive access to Facebook in Uruguay (Grupo Radar, 2014a, p36, p39) was facilitated by the wide spread of internet and national public policies such as the Ceibal Plan and the MEC Centres designed to promote and spread access to digital technologies (Grupo Radar, 2014b, p1; Radakovich and Escuder, 2013, p32-3). They included the installation of an antennas, public Wi-Fi connections (Beitler, 2013, p27, p29) and the distribution of laptops for children in low income households. International reports showed Uruguay as the Latin American country with the highest level of internet access in the region (El Pais, 2014b) with 75 % of people 12 years old or more as regular internet users (Grupo Radar, 2014b, p1). Similarly, these reports stated that one of the main incentives to start using Internet was the possibility of connecting

²² Without further evidence and details of the processes used for counting and verifying accounts, these figures obtained directly from the company should be quoted with caution. The figures by itself are not relevant for this thesis, but they are an indicator of the massive scale of this web-based service used around the world.

²³ Facebook may have been described as global technology, but it is not universal. The restriction of accessing Facebook in China quickly illustrates the fallacy of thinking the whole world as unified global village.

²⁴ The above observations does not try to underestimate an online industry that has been highly dynamic with emerging new service such as WhatsApp, already bought by Facebook, that have spread worldwide fast.

with others on Facebook (ESET, 2012; El País 2013; Grupo Radar, 2014a, p48), and 85 % of all internet users older than 12 years old, 1,700,000 people, regularly accessed Facebook in Uruguay.

A second factor defining Facebook is related to the importance of understanding the cultural diversity of its users (Miller, 2011; Miller et al., 2016). To observe the website as a monolithic and universal space may obscure the user's motivation for interacting and producing content. Miller et al. (2016, pxxv) suggested that Facebook may be better understood if analysed as a site lead by the users' ability to produce content. They generate content which is meaningful to their specific circumstances and cultural codes that "vary considerably from region to region". And, an observation "in one place should not be understood as a general description of social media" (Miller et al. 2016, px). For example, boyd and Ellison (2008, p211) understood that Facebook was mainly for "communicating with people who already were part of their extended social network". This may be in line with the common practices of most Facebook users (boyd, 2010, p43), but in the specific context of a political campaign people without previous connection used Facebook to gather, launch and spread alternative candidatures for the FA among unknown people.

The value of this platform also needs to be associated to its capacity to work as a networked technology with common codes that allow the integration of content from other websites. Much of the content published on Facebook pages campaigning for the 2014 Uruguayan elections was first generated as YouTube videos, articles on blogs, newspapers or synchronisation with other SNS such as Twitter. To understand content production on Facebook, it is necessary to discard the notion of a single medium and the differentiation between offline and online spaces. Instead, it is more useful to think of these platforms as part of an experience mediated by digital technologies which can be amplified, multiply and modified by users' activities (Miller et al., 2016, x).

The last issue for the conceptualisation of Facebook considered here²⁵ is related to its constantly changing features that prevent reaching a lasting definition of what the Facebook's affordances are. Trottier and Fuchs (2014, p6) define Facebook as a "meta-communication technology" that integrates tools of cognition,

²⁵ The conceptualisation of Facebook is reconsidered in the next chapter dedicated to reviewing existing literature on this type of platforms.

communication and cooperation, which “combine many different type media and information and communication technologies, such as webpage, webmail, digital image, digital video, discussion group, guest book, connection list or search engine”. By considering these constant changes, it is important to clarify that this thesis has only considered the Facebook’s features availed in Uruguay until the end of 2014 when the research fieldwork ended. New features such as the Reactions²⁶ globally introduced in 2016 and officially defined as “an extension of the Like button, to give you more ways to share your reaction to a post in a quick and easy way” (Krug, 2016) were not observed in the fieldwork of this thesis²⁷ and are not considered in the analysis. Similarly, Uruguay never experienced the opportunity of using the ‘I Voted’ Button, which it was first used in the USA in 2008, but never globally released and only available in a few countries, including India and the UK during election days.

Facebook provides devices for quick response and interaction such as the Like Button. These social buttons, to use Gerlitz and Helmod (2013) term, are part of Facebook’s everyday users’ activity and were already present on Facemash, a previous online site created by Mark Zuckerberg in 2003. Zuckerberg considered this site as a first prototype from where the idea of Thefacebook started developing (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p28). Facemash compared two students’ profile pictures and provided a button to decide which one was more attractive (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p23). Before the existence of Facemash, sex-appeal valuations of classmates were a common practice between Zuckerberg’s fellow students at Phillips Exeter preparatory Academy and at Harvard University (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p91). They used the pictures on the class directory to see who and where the cutest classmates were (Cassidy, 2006, p2). The interaction with profiles pictures through the use of a button on Facemash changed this practice by recording users’ reactions that allowed the creation of a sex-appeal ranking based on affective reactions and objectified data.

Back in 2004, the first social button on Thefacebook was the Poke button (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p32; Wickman, 2014; Willett, 2015). The button allowed a sender to click on the profile of a poked recipient, who could

²⁶ Reactions did not replace the Like Button, but are options that can be pulled-down from the Like Button. They were introduced by a public demand of having more options to react to posts (Krug, 2016).

²⁷ An update on all major technological introductions by date was available on the Facebook News Room Page <https://newsroom.fb.com/companyinfo/>. Last accessed on 30 June 2017.

decide to poke back. Originally displayed in a prominent place on every user's profile (Willett, 2015), it was a personal and direct one-to-one form of interaction that notified the user of having been poked by a specific person. Authors such as Kirkpatrick (2010, p91), Wickman (2014), Willett (2015), Wilson et al. (2012, p214) and the CEO of the company (Zuckerberg in Glass, 2015) agreed that this button has been understood in many different ways. The use of the button gradually faded away and most people did not use it after it was buried in the pull-down menu of the 2011 redesigned Personal Profile Page.

The use of this button was not observed during this research but a quick analysis of it is relevant in so far as it provides evidence on how the ambiguity around social buttons allowed the creation of different meanings that were re-signified by users. In Kirkpatrick (2010, p32), Zuckerberg is quoted as saying: "We thought it would be fun to make a feature that has no specific purpose...So mess around with it, because you're not getting an explanation from us". The lack of an official explanation helped the users' re-signification and re-appropriation of its meaning according to their own interpretations (Glass, 2015; Wickman, 2014; Willett, 2015). In line with Lury and Marres' (2015, p246) analysis of online media, a valuable object may be understood as part a multi-valance dynamic, in which actors are able to articulate one of the many possible solutions for achieving specific needs in certain social environment and situations. Wickman (2014) has indicated that "the poke seems to have taken on different meanings across other cultures and spaces". It was considered in some campuses as an extension of Facemash and associated with the use of Friendster²⁸ for flirting. Similarly, some users considered as a creepy and inappropriate sexual insinuation (Wickman, 2014; Willett, 2015). Others saw it as an innocent way to say hello to friends or as a "Poke Wars" game between friends who wanted to catch attention or get away from their examination revisions. It's usage and ambiguity could be also problematic and misunderstood, so some users refrained from clicking on it (Willett, 2015).

Instead of the Poke Button, the Share, Like and Comment buttons become widespread across all pages on Facebook. And, since 2009 they were accompanied by the counting and list of users who had clicked them

²⁸ Friendster was a previous SNS used by Zuckerberg (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p27) in which search of dates and personal presentation for dating become very noticeable (boyd, 2003).

on specific content or pages (Grosser, 2014, p14). The Share Button first appeared in 2006 when Facebook became available in Uruguay and allowed users to re-publish content that users may have considered interesting (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013, p8). The possibility of commenting on any content was already possible by clicking the Comment button (Yadav, 2006), which allowed users to type text freely, use images, hyperlinks or pre-coded reactions normally called emoticons. The Like button was introduced in 2009 and considered on a Facebook official statement as a way of simplifying connections around the world and empowering users with a better communication experience – an official company motto and common argument on Facebook (2014). The Like button could be thought as a shortcut for “affective statements like ‘Awesome’ and ‘Congrats!’” (Chan, 2009a). The clicking of these buttons was enacted in relation to content created by other users in a shared space where the numbers of reactions or lack of reactions could be seen.

Figure 4: Post from a Facebook Open Group with Social Buttons and their metrics.



Source: Facebook Group VAMOS POR MAS FRENTE AMPLIO.

In line with the Analysis of Benkler (2006) about the structure of online technologies, social buttons implied specific actions and affective reactions that challenge the idea of neutrality in the design of Facebook's affordances for the interactions between users. The Like Button was officially defined as way of telling “your friends that you enjoyed their post or comment” (Facebook, 2017a); and recognised as a form of positive engagement with them (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013, p9). Facebook never had a dislike button and promoted what were considered a social button associated with a clear positive reaction. It “prompt to like, enjoy, recommend and buy as opposed to discuss or critique” (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013, p26). And, the decisions

to move the Poke Button out of the central place on Personal Profiles and promote the Like, Share a Comment buttons might be associated with an interest in avoiding confusing and undesired association of that former button and facilitate a one-step form of connection that was clear and could eliciting more interactions. Similarly, social buttons can be generally defined as pre-coded available actions for “a quick and easy form of social interaction” (Wilson et al., 2012, p214) that can be performed with a simple click but they are also affective reactions that generate relational information and traceable connections between users, pages and content (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013, p18). Social buttons have been thought as to content in a public or semi-public space that display the counting of clicks as the number of responses to content. Gerlitz and Helmond also describe how the Like button works as part of an algorithmic that calculates the relevance of content to be shown on Personal Pages. This observation was also shared by Gerodimos and Justinussen (2014, p10) and Vaccari (2013) who analysed the endorsement effect of social buttons on a network of users and the peers influence on Baraka Obama's campaigns.

For this research, three aspects of the social buttons are especially relevant and to analyse valuation processes on *productive publics*. The first one is the capacity to unify and aggregate users' responses into a common form of measurement. The second is the public display of the counting of responses. And the third is the possibility of observing a list of people who performed the action and their endorsement of content. This public quantification of users' reactions has a performative effect on how users observe and react to content. According to Arvidsson and Peitersen (2013, p93) and Grosser (2014, p7) these metrics may allow users to start seeing posts in terms of prestige or, in other words, a quantification and comparison of how many reactions users are able to generate in the public. Not only do metrics show the numbers of reactions generated by a content, but they might also be considered as devices that allow the public to gather and become visible around content and its representation (Esposito, 2017, p357).

Section 2.1.2 – Facebook as a valuable service

A presentation on Facebook would not be complete without describing it as a multibillionaire corporation with its headquarter in the USA and commercial offices in many countries including Brazil and Argentina, where the relative smaller Uruguayan market was administrated and commercially covered. The data

generated by users in daily interactions on the platform has been greatly praised in business analysis (Kirkpatrick, 2010, p261; Li, 2011; Marr, 2015, p22-3; Mitchell, 2009; Owyang, 2012; Wilson et al., 2012, p203) and considered by scholars as a form of monetizing users' interests and information (Edosomwan et al., 2011, p5; Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013, p12; Grosser, 2014, p4; van Dijck, 2013). By clicking the Like Button on a Fan Page, users not only satisfied their needs of connecting with others and showing their interests and views, but they also generated information that could be re-purposed in different ways. The more connections users generate with labelled topics, brands or political issues, the more information Facebook has to offer to potential clients (Grosser, 2014, p4). The data generated on different pages is then centralised by Facebook (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013, p34) and used for profitable businesses based on information provided by users and the possibility of catching the attention of millions of people to be targeted with advertised content. Everything becomes subject to advertising, and the massive use of Facebook promises all types of information for those interested in campaigning on this platform.

By following Miller (2011) and boyd and Ellison's (2008) analysis of Facebook, its great popularity may be explained by its ability to occupy an important role in the everyday socialization of its users. Previous *Social Network Sites* such as SixDegrees failed to maintain its services, because people in the late 1990s had a much more limited understanding and access to online services; and were not prepared to move their personal interactions and time to online media (boyd and Ellison, 2008, p214). Conversely, Facebook became popular when online access and the culture were more developed and excelled as a medium for everyday life communications and sociability. Similarly, Facebook has been able to incorporate new features such as, photo galleries, group chats, calendars and event invitations, voice calls, videos, gifs, games and emoticons that people were keen to use.

Section 2.2. – Facebook affordances for the creation of publics.

To understand how a meaningful space for participation may be created on Facebook, a more detail description of four different types of pages offered by the platform²⁹ is necessary. Personal Profiles Page,

²⁹ This thesis mentions the use of Event Pages in some of its chapters, but it did not focus on this type of Pages considered subsidiaries of the Personal Profiles and Fan Pages from which Events could be

Groups Page, Fan Pages and Events Pages have specific features that played important roles in the socialisation of FA's supporters on Facebook and where the spaces were valuable interactions and practices could be enacted. One of the basic arguments, on which this thesis is based, considers Facebook as a set of technological affordances (Benkler, 2006, p17, p38) that provides users with media and tools to be adapted and re-signified to the specific circumstances, possibilities and needs of the FA and its supporters.

Section 2.2.1 – Personal Profile Pages

From the user's perspective, the Personal Profile Page is a password-protected entry to Facebook where the users' identity is verified, and services provided. It is the starting point to all activity, where users can publish photos, videos, write text or post links to other Facebook pages or external websites. Similarly, rights to create and access Group Pages and Fan Pages are gained from and linked to a Personal Profile. A Personal Page that is reviewed and classified as non-representative of real person could be forcibly closed or transformed into a Fan Page.

The company considers that its core value is based on the fact that accounts are actual representations of real people's interests and views, and it emphasises the importance of using Personal Profiles as part of a unique real person identification online (Facebook, 2017c). The central components that add value to the platform and users' experience are in the Personal Pages, which display a list of users, contents and tools for establishing new connections with other people (boyd and Ellison, 2008, p211). From these pages users receive, contribute and produce content and make connections and subscriptions to pages that will provide information to be included in the user's news feed on the personal home page.

A Personal Page has a maximum of 5,000 possible connections with other Personal Pages, but most of the accounts have a considerable lower number of connections. In Uruguay, the average number of personal connections, or Facebook Friends, per account was 430 by 2014 (De Marco, 2014; Grupo Radar, 2014,

administrated. A fifth space for interaction is the chat. They may also be considered as different form for communicating with a network or one-to-one. They are not public and this research has not investigated the dynamic of chat groups. However, they played an important role in the communication and organisation of specific activities and are mentioned as an important channel for interactions in chapter 6.

p52). Only very popular users, such as Pedro, María or Mariano, actively campaigning during the elections and explicitly interested in building an audience reached that maximum number of 5,000 connections. By 2014, Facebook actively encouraged users to transform the Personal Profile in a Fan Page when he or she had reached that number of connections. Those very popular users interviewed for this study refused to do so, because a Fan Page supposes a different type of relationship with Personal Profiles³⁰

Following boyd and Ellison's (2008, p213) analysis of users' interactivity, the Facebook Friend connections a is bi-directional link between two accounts that requires the users' actions of sending and invitation to be connected and a confirmation from another user who receives the request. A Facebook "Friend" connection contributes to accounts' news feed and might allow certain rights, such as: writing on the other's wall, accessing information on the different subsections and subpages of the Personal Profile, and enhancing communication channels such as the direct messenger.

Section 2.2.2 – Group Pages

There are three types of Group Pages - Open, Closed, and Secret –, which are based on different criteria of visibility and accessibility. Any user can create a Group from a Personal Page and automatically become administrator. A Group can have a couple users or several thousands of members – such as it was the case of the group "Frente Amplio, Uruguay" described in detail in the sixth chapter. According to Facebook's (2017c) official statement and experts on this platform (American Majority, 2013, Nyquist, 2015), Groups were thought to provide members with the same opportunities for posting content on the Wall, but non-member could not generate content or participate on these pages. Group Pages can be though if a multi-directional hub that allow users to generate content independently on a share Wall and receive post created by the other members. This has been considered a problem for companies and organisation, which cannot control what group members post (American Majority, 2013).

Groups establishes a distinction by creating an external boundary between members and non-member and an internal hierarchy between regular members and administrators. Administrators have more rights and

³⁰ Some of them chose to create another Personal account, a common practice among those involved in political discussions.

control over the page. They can pin content on the top of Wall, remove content, add users and designate them as administrators or remove them from the Group. The difference between members and non-members has important practical implications which affects a user's ability to participate and observe content on the Wall depending the type of Group.

An Open Group can be defined by its public visibility. In 2014, the members and the content posted on the Wall of this type of Groups were available to any internet user without the need of having a Facebook account. Any user could ask to join this type of Group and become a member and allowed to post content after the administrator's approval of the request. A Closed Group varied from an Open Group in the visibility of the contents published on its Wall. Only members of a Closed Group were able to see what users had posted on it. But, similarly to an Open Group, access to these types of groups could be requested. Finally, Secret Groups were invisible to users who have not been invited by the administrator. A request to join a Secret Group or access the content on these pages was not possible, but only available by invitation.

Section 2.2.3 – Event Pages

Events Pages could also be created by any user and work as a dairy for a proposed activity with a specific place and time. They could be managed from a Personal Page or Fan Page and, in the FA campaign, were used to promote political talks, gatherings, rallies and celebrations. In a similar fashion to Group Pages, Events could be Public or Private. But, this research only looked at Public Events aimed at adding others to activities that were open and publicly supporting the FA. Everyone included in the Event Page could make comments, but the creator had different management rights and could add or remove people or make changes in the details of the Page. Reminders for people included as attendees and paid advertisement were available for this type of pages.

Section 2.2.4 – Fan Pages

Fan Pages were introduced in 2007 with a series of interfaces and devices especially designed to generate adverts and promoting content. Any user could create a Fan Page, but they were suggested for companies and organisations (Facebook, 2017b) that may attract a large audience and may require more than one administrator or other roles such as editors, advertisers or analysts (Facebook, 2016) to engage with the public on a visible space.

A page administrator was in total control of the page and can include and remove content and ban users from the page. If a user wanted to promote content and create brand strategy, such as was the case of the FA's National Commission, then, a Fan Page was required. After a few tens Likes or subscription from users the page starts providing statistics and charts about the type of users reached and their interactions with page. This allows page administrators to track its performance on a daily basis and generate paid campaigns to boost the page reach. Politicians and political parties are advised to open this type of pages and all political parties in Uruguay did so (Daniel, interview, 2014). Not only do Fan Pages allow the creation of an online audience and a campaign strategy, but they also provided administrators with a dashboard – called Page Insight – from where the page reach and the public reactions and demographic data for subscribers is measured.

Fan Page does not create bi-directional connections with other Pages, but it is mostly based on a unidirectional flow of information. Fan Pages were created to promote and distribute content among fans, but the content created by fans on their own pages did not feed Fan Pages. By clicking the Like Button or Follow Button on a Fan Page the number of Likes was increased by one unit on a counting of fans publicly displayed and, users started receiving content from it on their news feeds. Similarly, fans and visitors without administrative rights do not have access to the page's dashboard and its indicators thought for marketing campaigns. Fan Pages allow users to make comments on posts generated by the administrators but their comments are in a smaller case and usually collapsed in a pull-down window below the administrator or editor's post. By engaging with a page, users could help to distribute its content and the use of social buttons on a Fan Page increased the reach and visibility and show the users' public engagement and endorsement of the page.

Fans' comments on political pages were also usually restricted for blacklisted words to avoid inappropriate language or simple undesired words, which were commonly used to refer to confronted politicians.

Section 3 – Facebook and the 2014 national elections

The use of Facebook for political campaigns in Uruguay reached a new level in the 2009, when FA supporters organised a political gathering on the River Banks Avenue or Montevideo's Rambla without the consent of the party's structure and top leadership (Aguiar, 2012, p44; Vaz, 2010). Facebook Groups had been previously used to promote political rallies around the country and the creation of the biggest Uruguayan Group (analysed on chapter 6) dedicated to politics debates back to 2008. But, the Frenteampelistas Net – Redes Frenteampelistas – was an extra-institutional group that showed Uruguayans the possibility of using the platform as a new space for campaigning and mobilising supporters. This political group defined itself as a parallel and separate movement from the FA's formal political structure (Aguiar, 2012, p44) and gathered a diverse range of supporters tired of rigid party structures and internal disputes generated during the 2009 electoral race (Vaz, 2010). They aimed to renovate the means for political participation and considered online technologies including Facebook as a key component for that renovation (Aguiar, 2012, p53; Redes Frenteampelistas, 2011). Blogs, e-newsletters, email lists, instant messenger services and mobile phones had been previously used. But, Facebook which had already been adopted by a majority of Uruguayans (Grupo Radar, 2014b, p1), provided a new dynamic for inviting and promoting political events among a network of people who could see their Facebook friends and other users joining a campaign. What is now known as the Ramblazo 2009 (the 2009 great Rambla demonstration) was a massive event that exceeded all expectations and showed that citizens could skip the party's authorisation for campaigning (Rubio, 2013). Facebook helped supporters to join a new form of participation marked by fast mobilisation and massive support in short periods of time that did not require or suggest a long-term commitment. Similarly, the 2009 Banderazo or the Greater Flag – in Spanish – was an initiative suggested and organised by participants of Redes Frenteampelistas outside the party structure. They created a massive FA's flag which was carried across the country in a national rally, and it required the collaboration of many

people to gather the thousand meters of fabric to make the flag and the presence of hundreds of supporters in each town to hold the flag. The multi-site event generated a great enthusiasm and response from people who joined the rallies and posted images on Facebook. These were milestones in the political participation in Uruguay that showed Facebook as a channel to promote activities that successfully gather several thousands of supporters in the specific circumstance of a national election.

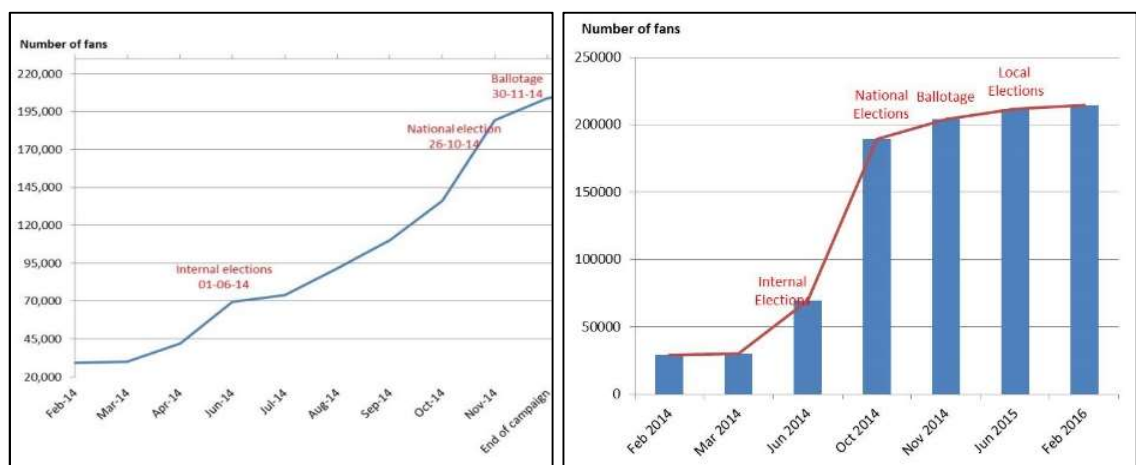
The FA opened its Facebook official Page in September 2011, when many hundreds of thousands of Uruguayans had already been actively campaigning on this site. By 2014 professional campaigners inside the party were still exploring and trying to understand the scope, limitations and the meaning of campaigning on Facebook (Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Paula, 2014, interview). The site was considered as an unsettled and constantly changing medium with benefits and cost and potential threats related to the lack of control in the production and circulation of content. But, the prominence of Facebook in Uruguayans' everyday interactions and the general interest in politics made this site a unique space for online interactions during the national elections. And, according to party officers and senior members of the FA, the 2014 campaign witnessed an unprecedented effort to try to organise and include online media in the party's communicational strategy (Federico, interview, 2014; Daniel, interview, 2014; Mariela, interview, 2014; Nicolas, interview, 2014) that was centralised by the National Commission of Propaganda and Communication (National Commission). FA leaders such as President José Mujica personally asked for the development of a Facebook campaign strategy (Nicolas, interview, 2014). And, a budget for campaigning and advertising was given to party officers who dedicated time, effort, and spent money to this site. But, to have a clear organised campaign on Facebook proved to an impossible task because of the simultaneous and scattered actions of diverse parties' teams and supporters on many different pages.

The fast-growing numbers of Facebook users on FA's pages could be associated the exceptional circumstances and dynamic of the electoral races in which the party and its supporters considered that extra efforts were crucial for deciding the future of the country between what they described as "two models of countries" (based on left-wing policies or right-wing policies). During the elections, Facebook metrics were used as mechanisms to evaluate the campaign's performance – a topic elaborated on chapters 5 and 6.

Party's officers and supporters aimed at reaching a larger audience, increase the number of fans and encourage them to campaign for the party thereby the use of social buttons and re-circulations of content on Facebook. Campaign teams worked to increase the number numbers of supporters and reactions on contents that were used to show the progress made towards their electoral goals.

The metrics visualised on the charts below do not intend to provide a causal explanation on the dynamic of the FA official page but illustrate different periods in terms of users' engagement with the site. These charts were created with data form the FA official Facebook Fan Page and were part of the exercise used by party's managers to monitor the development of the campaign. The right-hand chart shows how the presidential race was associated with a period of fast growing numbers of fans that ended after ballotage at the end of November 2014.

Figure 5: Number of fans on the Facebook FA official page from February 2014 to March 2016³¹



Source: data visualised and collected by the thesis author from <https://www.facebook.com/FrenteAmplioOficial>.

The first significant event of this electoral race was the internal election in June 2014, when a jump in the number of fans was also registered. Between July and the beginning October 2014 the party strongly campaigned and paid for advertisements that increased the visibility and reach of the page. This period was accompanied by an extraordinary fast growth in the number of fans and were especially prompted and

³¹ The bar chart on the right hand used different discrete time categories on the y axis and is not suitable for a line chart in methodological terms. The reason for including a line is only used to show a period of fast growing in the number of supporters followed by different circumstances when little increase was observed. And analysis of rate increasing on this chart will not be methodologically valid and it is not suggested for the analysis of performances between different time intervals.

encourage to participate and join the page before the Election Day on the 26 October. The balloting between the National Party and the FA was described by some supporters (Daniel, interview 2014; Guillermo, interview 2014; Mariano, interview 2014) as a formality in which the FA had been already seen as the natural winner, against an opponent with no chance to win.

The above left-hand chart shows and compares the modest increase in the numbers of fans outside the context of a national election in 2015 and 2016. After the balloting on the 30 November 2014, FA's officers continued to promote party and government achievements on this page, but the growth rate was much lower. Even the 2015 local elections for departmental authorities taking place in June were not accompanied by the same public interest. There may have been multiple reasons associated with these different growing rates, such as lack paid advertisements or the difficulties in generating a constant growth with a limited number of party's supporters on Facebook. But, the above charts aimed at illustrating different times and scenarios that need to be considered as part of distinctive interactions among users on Facebook, the FA and the broader political system with its specific calendar and electoral seats.

Section 3.1 – Facebook: a platform for broadening opportunities

During the 2014 Uruguayan national elections, Facebook Pages and Groups related to local political issues, parties and candidates bloomed and multiplied. This was partially observed in the variety of page titles and topics such as: "I will nullify my vote on the 26 October 2014 Uruguayan Elections", "Frenteamplista who do not vote for Tabaré", "Constanza Moreira 2014" or Tabaré 2014". Similarly, multiple pages were dedicated to the national referendum on lowering the minimum age for imprisonment and prosecution of teenagers³². These later pages were not included in this research because the campaigns against and in favour of changing the law were not directly associated to the FA and part an effort beyond party boundaries. Finally, there were also Groups and Pages against the FA and their supporters such as "ELANTIFAZ.TUPASPICHIS" that opposed and attacked FA supporters and their electoral goals.

³² The FA's position was mostly associated with a negative response for lowering the age. The topic was crucial during the elections and used by part of the opposition as a sign of the government's incapacity to lower crime and guarantee people's security.

However, Paula who was working for FA Commission of Propaganda and Communication considered that Facebook had a limited scope: “it is micro-cosmos, with its own rules. It does not represent accurately the total population. It is just a percentage (...) and some of our followers are not average people” (Paula, interview, 2014). This comment might have also been supported by surveys which showed that only the 14 % of the population declared having used Facebook as a source of political information (Equipos, 2014a). This figure on Facebook usage and political communication might have also explained why some politicians and the FA's presidential formula considered unnecessary to have a Facebook account with their names³³. But, this approach to *Social Network Sites* also needs to be understood as part of political styles and personal perceptions. Gabriel (interview, 2014), a close collaborator of the presidential candidate said: “Tabaré has clearly said that he is not interested in having a Twitter or Facebook account and is not going to have one. He only does things which he feels are natural to him”. Paula (interview, 2014) also commented on Tabaré's attitude towards Facebook and stated her point of by saying:

“This is fine. It does not go well with his profile. It would have been something forced, and it would have not helped him (...) If you don't use it well, you'd rather not use it. (...) People expected you to respond, see you active all the time, giving the right responses. They want to have a conversation and it is good to respond. It helps to develop a campaign that people are asking for. You also learn that you don't need to respond all the time, but sometimes you need to, and you have to be alert”.

The use of Facebook was related to certain managerial views and reasoning that considered the necessary to campaign on it, but they considered the platform as a risky medium (Gibson and Ward, 2012, p64), where a proliferation of messages from unknown and unchecked sources and too much exposition of unnecessary topics could lead to miscommunication, communication overload, over-communication or false news (Vaccari, 2010, p321). The FA' National Commission seriously considered these issues during the campaign (Daniel, interview 2014, Paula, interview, 2014) and took action to avoid the risk of multiple voices and outsiders talking in the name of the party. Pages such as “Tabaré 2014” or “Frente Amplio, Uruguay” could

³³ The Facebook Page called “Tabaré 2014” was not an official page created by the party. And, it was denounced and closed days before the Election Day as part of Facebook terms and condition policy which requests forms of identities/ brand ownership confirmations when a page is denounced as fake.

be perceived as official channels and this national team considered them as threat and took actions briefly analysed further below on the chapter five and six.

However, the FA and their teams could not control the users' ability to create content, connections and new pages. *Productive publics* on Facebook were characterised by the users' freedom and ability to participate with independent contribution (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p116) that in the context of an electoral race created tensions around different perceptions in the form of supporting the party and using Facebook. These tensions were part of the differences and reach background of the FA as well as part of the construction of what is conceptualised in the next chapter as a *collective identity* (Melucci, 1995a).

Conclusions

The aim of this chapter was to introduce the main actors who were part of the object of study of this thesis in the specific circumstances of the 2014 Uruguayan elections. In line with the ethnographic approaches proposed by Miller (2011), Miller and Slater (2000) and Miller et al. (2016), the content generated on Facebook pages dedicated to the FA needs to be understood as part of a broader context and a specific culture. The country was described as a strong Latin American democracy with a vibrant civic life and relatively high levels of internet access that allowed a massive adoption of Facebook.

By considering that Facebook cannot be separated from a local culture (boyd and Ellison, 2008, p210, Miller, 2011; Miller and Slater, 2000) and the specific circumstance of a national election, this chapter may suggest that an ethnography³⁴ may be the most relevant approach to understanding why Facebook became valuable space for political participation. The vibrant and heterogeneous civic life could not be fully contained and confined to traditional party committees, and Facebook has been understood by political activists as a space where they could create their own pages to campaign outside official party structures. As a result, Facebook

³⁴ This methodological decision is elaborated in chapter three.

became a space, where the FA official page was only one among many other diverse political groups who supported and opposed the FA with various approaches and aims.

The FA was presented as a complex political coalition where several groups shared common left-wing ideological principles and opponents, but they kept their differences and own specific political cultures. The FA was presented as both a unified collective actor with a common electoral goal, and as the entanglement with multiple interests and internal tensions. Facebook could be partially thought of as an alternative space for expressing diverse opinion, and the separation between the supporters' disenchantment analysed by Moreira (2008, p53, p55-6) could be seen on some of those pages. To understand the existence of internal tensions inside this political front, the concept of *collective identity* (Melucci, 1995a) was already suggested and it will be elaborated in the literature review chapter and use to analyse the participation on Facebook pages.

The chapter's second section considered the term SNS to provide an initial conceptualization of Facebook and the creation of value as a result of users' capacity to generate content by in a specific context and culture. Similarly, the section described some of the most relevant features of Facebook that are crucial for the reading of the following chapters. User's Profiles, Groups and Fan Pages were briefly described as the three main types of spaces for building relationships with a public. Because Personal Profiles could be associated directly with personal details, this thesis will elaborate, in chapter three, the reasons to work and analyse participation on Open Group Pages and Fan Pages only.

The descriptions provided on the political culture of FA supporters' and the affordances of Facebook to create content and interactions will be fundamental in understanding how value could be produced on this site. The electoral race generated specific circumstances in which gathering public support became crucial, but the rationality and the meanings behind users' participation are deeply rooted in the supporters' culture and their socialisation processes. The fight for an inclusive society, human rights and democracy were only some of the general premises on which people participate. Other users produced content to show their anger with right-wing ideas or simple express her blind passion for FA candidates. Facebook allowed all kinds of content to be produced by users independently. And, the formation of *productive publics*, analysed

in the following chapters, were characterised by flexible forms of participation, which did not always comply with the expectation and interests of other Facebook users.

By reviewing the so-called social buttons, the chapter started introducing the main points to be developed in the thesis. They were associated with the metrification of social life and a multivalence dynamic based on their capacity to simplify and quantify users' reaction that could be understood in relation to certain circumstances, possibilities and needs. In other words, the chapter started suggesting that the meaning of metrics needs to be apprehended in relation to specific cultural frames and meanings. Similarly, this inherent metrification of users' responses was associated with the everyday interaction of users with and within a public will be associated later with the idea of a popularisation of an *audit culture* (Espeland and Sauder, 2007).

Chapter 2 – Literature Review. *Understanding previous approaches to online publics in political campaigns*

Introduction

In the last two decades, the fields of political communication and media studies have renovated their research interests in the use of social media³⁵ as a means for novel forms of political participation (Gibson and Ward, 2012; Scammell, 2014, p25; Vaccari, 2013; Wilson et al., 2012). Events such as Arab Spring, or the 2008 Obama campaign were considered a milestone in the use of digital media for political communication (Fuchs, 2014a, p2, p83-4; Gaffney, 2010; Gillespie, 2013). They enriched previous discussions around the production of information and political activities in digital economies and networked societies (Benkler, 2006; Castells, 1996; Jenkins, 2006). Social media have been queried as channel for high hopes (Engesser et al., 2017, p1283) and delusions in relation to the possibilities of mobilising disengaged and unvoiced groups and the strengthening or threatening democratic values with populist communicational styles followed by highly controversial leaders such as Donald Trump.

By conducting a literature review on academic debates, this chapter provides the thesis with analytical tools to unfold the research questions on how Facebook became a valuable space for *productive publics* in the 2014 FA political campaign. Those debates have been strongly enhanced by the conceptualisation of social media as the materialisation of a paradigm change which brought novel possibilities for public's direct participation in the production, circulation and co-creation of content considered as valuable assets in an informational economy (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013; Benkler, 2006; Bruns, 2006; Jenkins, 2006; Levenshus, 2010). As a result of this review, the chapter locates the thesis in the intersection of three broad academic fields that organised the material in three sections related 1) online media studies and value production, 2) political communications and online media, and 3) the review of specific theories on value provided by Dewey (1939), Goffman (1986) and Boltanski and Thévenot (2006).

³⁵ This broad and loose concept is reviewed and discussed further below in this chapter.

In the first section, different conceptualisations of social media and the metrification of online interactions are considered in relation to the analysis of value creation. Not only does the section aim to recognise a set of useful analytical tools, but it also engages with existing debates and humbly tries to contribute with a critical review and specification of widely used concepts such as big data, *Social Networking Sites* and social media itself. Without losing the thesis' objective, the section provides the reasons for discarding some of those definitions and considering Arvidsson and Peitersen's (2013) conceptualisation of *productive publics* and boyd and Ellison's (2008) definition of *Social Network Site* (SNS) as the preliminary most suitable options for conducting this research.

The second section considers political communication debates around specific political events raised by the 2008 Obama campaign and what has been called a renewed wave of populism (Gerbaudo, 2015; Engesser et al., 2016; 2017; Groshek and Koc-Michalska, 2017). Here, a distinctive dynamic of content production and circulation is described in relation to the capacities provided to networked users by social media. The change from a centralised and vertical model of communication to a collaborative a multisite form of communication with the possibility of immediateness and sense of direct connection are discussed in relation to the two different concepts of branding and populist style of communication. To describe this dynamic and focus on the topic of online participation as a source for value production, the concept of *productive publics* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013) and Espeland and Sauder's (2007) analysis on the *audit culture* are introduced.

A brief subsection related to this distinctive form of political communications brought by digital technologies introduces the academic debates around populism and social media. This provide an opportunity to cover the notion of *productive publics* in relation a new wave of social protest and denouncements using social media. Here, Melucci's (1996) procedural approach to collective identity used by scholars analysing social movements online (Aguiar, 2012; Gerbaudo, 2015; Gerbaudo and Treré, 2015; Kavada, 2015; Milan, 2015) is recognised as a useful and term to study *collective action* in political groups.

The final section pays especial attention to the conceptualisation for an empirical analysis of value creation provided by Dewey (1939), Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) and Goffman (1986). Their views on value as part of a relational and open process is considered as especially useful for an ethnographic exploration and understanding of multiple forms of valuations enacted by the diverse actors who participate on the FA's Facebook campaign. Dewey's general theory provides the basis to consider the different practices as subject to different form of values that need to be understood in relation to certain logic of actions and thinking. Similarly, Boltanski and Thévenot suggest a form for making the logics behind valuation visible by looking conflicts between actors and who they put in action and enact rationalisations that justify their actions. Goffman analysis on framing is also considered as a useful approach to o analyse the content and discourse on Facebook as form of enacting certain forms of value and relationships among the intervening actors.

The vast number of studies and article on Facebook and political activities shows the interest and relevance of the thesis' object for inside and outside academy. However, the chapter shows that the ethnographic study of metrics and valuation process in online political campaign remains mostly unexplored with a few exception – Gerbaudo (2014a; 2016); Milan (2015) – and has no academic studies ethnographically conducted in the specific context of Uruguay. By reviewing the existing literature, this chapter provides the thesis with analytical tools for finding and analysing a specific topic and case of study to expand the academic debate on the value of the participation of Facebook's publics in political campaigns. Similarly, the effort made in leasing with three different fields of study can be considered as part of the distinctive approach of this thesis.

Section 1 – Defining online publics for the analysis of value production.

Section 1.1 - Social media, big data and Social Network Sites

The possibility of understanding the production of values on Facebook requires using specific terminology that this chapter aims to review. boyd and Ellison's (2008) definition of SNS was already briefly introduced

to refer to Facebook; and *productive public* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013) mentioned in relation to the analysis of value production as result of users' interactions. These two conceptualisations now need to be study in detail and considered in relation to other widely used terms that may be vaguely used to talk about online media.

The widely reference of Facebook as social media inside and outside academia prompts the chapter to study this umbrella term vaguely used to refer to online platforms that allow users to create personalised profiles and connect with others (Fuchs, 2014; Miller et al., 2016). Fuchs (2014) comprehensive review on social media pointed out the tautological nature of the term and considering that, every mediated action with others is by definition social. From this point of view, not only is Facebook a social medium, but "the television, the radio, the telegraph, posters, books, wall paintings and all other forms of information" are also social media (Fuchs, 2014, p4). The earliest definition reviewed by Fuchs is provided by Shriky (2008) and describe social media as tools that "increase our ability to share, to co-operate with one another, and to take collective action, all outside the framework of institutional institutions and organisations" (2008, p20f apud Fuchs, 2014, p35). The term engulfs previous conceptualisation such as Web 2.0 and *social software* and used to describe a myriad of online platforms without providing a detail definition.

Fuchs' (2014) approach focuses on the commercial exploitation of data and labour of users shared with other authors (Arvidsson; 2003; 2016; 2012; Barta and Neff, 2015; Trottier and Fuchs, 2014). And it describes Facebook as an international multi-billionaire company in a capitalist informational economy. From this perspective, content created by users and their time spent on Facebook are considered as free labour appropriated by the company. This is very useful to analyse the monetisation of information sold for advertisement and the surveillance activities that help to maintain the status quo (Morozov; 2011).

Here, political economy categories have not been followed as a starting point to query about how and why Facebook became valuable for the FA and its supporters. Members of the Socialist and the Communist parties understood Facebook as a capitalist company making profits from adverts shown in the same Group and Pages that they created. However, this thesis considers that a characterisation of Facebook as an agent of the informational capitalism may not be enough to understand why they use and spent time on this site.

Similarly, this thesis acknowledges a prolific literature that has studied technology from an Actor Network Theory (ANT) approach, but it does not take on this perspective for the study here conducted. ANT studies are typically used to study objects from an open perspective that discards pre-conceptualisation that may damage the academic research (Latour, 2005). Their descriptions of actions as an entanglement of different actors who connect in certain form to achieve one result among multiple possible options (Callon, 1990) is here considered as a valid and stimulating point for guiding a research. Authors who followed this perspective such as Michel Callon, Casper Jensen, Bruno Latour, John Law or Annemarie Mol are mentioned in this thesis, but they are not followed as main theoretical references. As such, there is no real gain for this thesis in entering into an intricate debate around the epistemology of ANT approaches. Indeed, two main aspects of ANT were considered problematic for the design of this thesis and avoided. The first one is the theoretical proposal to the flattening of human and non-human actors as a starting point for the analysis of agency. This might be problematic if it hides the researcher's interests and choices required to conduct a study. The second one is a possible incompatibility with the human centred ethnographic design of this research that considers value and valuations as a result of specific goals and needs.

Without escaping from the aforementioned tautology, Fuchs' defines social media as vague term use to describe online platforms that allow connections between two people or more and "trace the emergence of social media to when Tim O'Reilly (2005) introduced the term 'Web 2.0'³⁶ in 2005" (Trottier and Fuchs, 2014, p4). This general definition includes newspaper online, email services and Facebook as all part of social media (Trottier and Fuchs, 2014, p5). His definition of social media seems to respond to the need of

³⁶ Web 2.0 was a response from the software sector to the post 2000-2 dotcom-bust aimed at promoting business based on the clarification of digital technology capability for 'revolutionary form of value production. The concept puts emphasis on the technological development of an architecture for peer-production to develop and improve products and services. The concept was originally linked to a type of business model in which users could test online technologies and contribute to enhance its value by constantly providing feedback or even work directly in its development. After being publicised as technological revolution on mainstream media outlets, the term gaining a general recognition and was considered in academic publications. However, Web 2.0 lacks of specificity and is not the most useful term to explain the specificities of value production on Facebook. A Similar argument may be applied to the term Web 3.0. A lose term that may be included in what has been already described as *participatory culture* or the same Web 2.0 definition. For a detailed description of the term see O'Reilly, T. (2005). What Is Web 2.0, Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software, Web 2.0 Conference. O'Reilly Media, San Francisco and O'Reilly, T. and Battelle, J. (2009). Web Squared: Web 2.0 Five Years On. p. 1-13, Web 2.0 Summit. O'Reilly AlphaTech Ventures, San Francisco.

demarcating a buzzword loosely used and provide an umbrella term for his own interest in discussing online technology from a political economy perspective (Fuchs, 2014, p32-7). Similarly, Miller et al. (2016) also argue that social media is a vague umbrella term to talk about the myriad of existing online platforms.

As a result of the analysis of those comprehensive and authoritative reviews on digital media, this thesis avoids using the term social media to refer to Facebook and considers other concepts more useful for the analysis of value production. As previously discussed at the beginning of the second section of chapter one, the definition of SNS has been considered as a more appropriate to describe the main components of Facebook from an ethnographic and users' perspective and refer to similar platforms (Miller, et al., 2016, p9-10) based on the users' capacity to personalise public or semi-public pages to share content with others (boyd and Ellison, 2008, p211). This thesis may require referring to a series of digital platforms that allow the creation of online publics and use SNS as an umbrella term. This term is discussed below in this chapter and may substitute social media to describe the characteristics of sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube or Instagram.

The differences between Facebook and other online media such as e-mail accounts or a newspaper's webpage made Trottier and Fuchs' (2014) recognise three subcategories of social media that response to the diverse possibilities and options provided by online technologies³⁷. Facebook is used as an example of their third subcategory and may be considered as a modification of the definition of boyd and Ellison's description of SNS. By making this clarification, Trottier and Fuchs implicitly argue that social media might not be the most precise term to describe Facebook and propose the term *Social Networking Sites* to refer to it.

³⁷ The three subcategories are related to the suggestion of conducting an empirical classification based on the recognition of cognition, communication or cooperation as the main characteristic supported by the medium. If it is possible to argue that these three attributes can be found in most form of digital media, Fuchs and Trottier's analytical proposal suggests online newspapers as platforms primarily supporting cognition and needed to be included in the first subcategory. Mysteriously, interaction by e-mail should not be mainly considered as collaborative work and is included in the second category of social media whose main purpose is to allow communication or, in other words, dialogue among users. The third category is related to platforms which facilitate collaboration among users and includes very different platforms with distinctive dynamics such as Wikipedia or Facebook.

An interesting and speculative question related to the current popularity of the term social media may be thought in the idea of emphasis on a novel form of news production. Is it possible to say a majority of people mostly associate the term with Twitter and Facebook as novel sources of news? And the notion of media in the term is mostly thought as synonym of news production, which has now changed by the possibility of alternative actors to influence the distribution of news? These questions are partially related to the brief analysis of online populism developed in the section 2.3 of this chapter, but there is no scope in this thesis to answer these question that could help in futures debates around the construction of SNSs in the public imagination.

The term big data has also occupied a central space in academic debates and focused in the possibility of using online media to extract valuable information about people behaviour and interests (boyd and Crawford, 2011; Lycett, 2013; Rae and Singleton, 2015; Vis, 2013). It was introduced into the academic context in the very first years of the 21st century by Diebold and defined as “the explosion in the quantity (and sometimes quality) of available and potentially relevant data, largely the result of recent and unprecedented advancements in data recording and storage technology” (2003, p115). Big data has put emphasis on the new possibilities of describing whole populations of users and finding social trends which are in line with the massive adoption of digital devices and online platforms such as Facebook.

The popularity of the term has been linked to its recognition as novel forms of extracting valuable information and data analysis that might provide a breakthrough academic approach (boyd and Crawford, 2011; Beer and Burrows, 2007; Savage and Burrows, 2007; Vis, 2013); or competitive advantage in the market (Lycett, 2013) or political campaigns (Scammell, 2014; Vaccari, 2010). Its values is usually connected with the confidence in algorithms and automatized techniques for recognising patterns “in large datasets [, allegedly,]³⁸ without departing from any priori presuppositions about the nature of those regularities” (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p120). Keywords, online search and other traces left by users such as the click on Facebook’s social buttons are recorded and may be latter subject to deductive or inferential statistics

³⁸ The word allegedly and punctuations in between brackets has been added to the quote by the researcher.

to apply direct marketing techniques or segmentation strategies for a political campaign. Similarly, the capacity of online media to trace user's activities and provide analytical tools in real-time (Lury et. al., 2012; van Dijck, 2014) may be of great value for a campaign manager interested in catching voters' reactions to public issues in the fast-moving informational scenarios of an election.

Despite being used across disciplines, there is little consent regarding its meaning and its methodological value for analysing entire populations or phenomena (boyd and Crawford, 2011; Rae and Singleton, 2015, p4; Uprichard, 2013). A point in contact between big *data* and Web 2.0 can be found in their emphasis around the production of value around the use of data created by users. Similarly, the terms are vaguely used to refer to a multiplicity of phenomena and services – from Amazon's recommendation system to Facebook's segmentation techniques and Google algorithms for recognising the population's interests – connected with the production of large amounts of data that "is too big to handle or analyse using existing tools" (Rae and Singleton, 2015, p1). Big data is associated with the opportunity to extract value out of users' activity around specific interests, but it is vaguely used and does not provide any specific description about their motivations and the materialities whereby value may be recognised. As a result, the term lacks the type of precision and clarity that might be helpful for the analysis of this thesis.

The term *SNS* (boyd and Ellison, 2008), already described in chapter one, is an empirically based definition aimed at analysing how digital affordances allow users to find and connect with others in a network space where multimedia content and events can be shared via multiple channels. The term was used to understand the impact of digital dynamics in the everyday life of individual and it is useful to describe their participation in the creation and circulation of content among groups of connected users. In line with Kirkpatrick's (2010) descriptions, Facebook can be thought as a valuable service for communication. This service is aligned with basic human needs such as a "desire to monitor other and maintain social bonds, even in networks that are geographically distant" (Wilson, et al., 2012, p209).

To further bolster the description of *SNS* and include it into the academic debate, it is relevant to consider boyd (2010, p40) reference to Facebook, as a *networked public*. *SNSs* have been understood as public or semi-public spaces where self-presentation and the images may be enriched. boyd and Ellison's

categorisation of public a semi-public is not related to Arvidsson and Peitersen (2013) conceptualisation of *productive publics* considered below in this chapter. The qualification of public and semi-public is aligned with the description around Fan Pages and Open Groups versus Closed Groups or Personal Profile with a restricted access provided in the first chapter. Public is defined in terms of information openness and visibility and understood as spaces where content can be seen by everyone with an online connection. The FA's official Facebook Page³⁹ can be easily understood as a public space. And a FA's Closed Group may be considered as a semi-public space in which the content visibility is restrict to a specific group of people who are connected and gathered around the group where content is shared as common interest and topic for debate and consideration.

SNS is particularly useful to describe three main aspects of Facebook related to the analysis of *productive publics* and value creation. A first key aspect for the analysis of value production is the recognition of SNS as self-managed and independent spaces for creating and distributing content⁴⁰ around a networked users. Content production is understood as part of the user's agency and a voluntary effort. Users are interested in building up their accounts or profiles – as boyd (2010) prefers to call the network's nodes. By linking a personal account with a political statement or party, users build an online identity recognised in relation specific values and groups. The recognition of this attribute is useful to understand to concept of *collective identity* (considered further below) and related to how individuals are able to maintain and negotiate their identity with others.

A second attribute is directly related to the interactions with other users and the analysis of conventions among peers. Facebook Groups and Pages may become a space where a user can be recognised as a valid member in relation to certain practices, skills or attributes that he or she may enact for the group. Skills can be materialised in multiple ways: from the writing of a useful code for an open source software or the

³⁹ The page can be publicly accessed on <https://www.facebook.com/FrenteAmplioOficial>.

⁴⁰ Although platforms like Facebook allow managing privacy settings that impact on the circulation and possibilities of tagging users (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013), the displaying of contents on diverse page (from personal profiles to open groups) is not exclusive controlled by users. Content curation is part of a process which involves algorithms and activity carried out by the multiple nodes participating in shared networks (Hogan, 2010). Similarly, it is necessary to recognised Facebook Inc. as the ultimate administrator and governor of the users' term and conditions rules.

ability to share interesting or entertaining content that supports the aims of a political party. boyd (2010) has acknowledged online publics as mechanisms for reinforcing values and judging appropriate and inappropriate behaviours. This observation needs to be considered in relation to Arvidsson and Peitersen description of *productive public* as groups which “has its own law of value that enables the conversion of concrete value judgements to a reputation” (2013, p92).

Arvidsson and Peitersen (2013), boyd (2010) and Miller (2010) have conceptualised publics as witnesses and judges of actions in relation to conventions that decide what is ethically acceptable and useful in relation to a group or common. In line with the user’s independent contribution to content production, an alternative form of monitoring users has been considered by authors such as Agre (1994); boyd and Ellison (2008); Hogan (2010) or Miller (2011, p215). Albrechtslund (2008) suggested the term *participatory surveillance* to analyse how top-down surveillance model may be substituted by a more distributed evaluation on the quality and appropriateness of content. This is achieved by the explicit creation of inter-subjectivity rules and conventions enacted via comments or in more tacit forms such as the lack of responses or support from the others. The users’ capacity to generate content in relation to the specific causes promoted on FA’s pages is essential to establish a conceptual link between the cases observed in this thesis and the terms of *productive public* and *collective identity*. It is the individual’s interpersonal skills to contribute to the group and the substantiation/endorsement in terms of peers’ recognition what can lead to emergence of *ethical capital*⁴¹ and reputation. The value of a user intervention is always materialised in relation to specific public’s views, interests and goals (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p94). And to be in public online spaces may create a powerful incentive for gaining public recognition as a valuable member (Benkler, 2006; Jenkins, 2006; Miller, 2011; Tkacz, 2015) and may lead to the creation of what is described further below as *ethical capital* and user’s reputation.

A third useful aspect of the definition is related to the analysis of how content flows and the possibility of searching, reproducing and escalating content on network of users. Content flow on SNSs is related to the connections made with users through devices provided by the platforms – this could be between Personal

⁴¹ A definition of ethical capital is provided below in the section 1.3 of this chapter.

Profiles or in the unilateral following of the Fan Page of a presidential candidate followed by millions. A network focused on the connection managed from specific accounts creates a certain type of dynamic in which users and content might circulate independently according to the interests shared by those networked accounts and targeted audiences.

By following Bennett et al. (2014) and Wilson et al. (2012), it is possible to link this third aspect with the first point related to the agency of users in the production of content in a network. The value of Facebook has been analysed in relation to the possibility of making and creating connections with others around what can be considered “post self-relevant information” created by a user from one of the platform pages (Wilson et al., 2012, p214). Similarly, Bennett, et al. (2014, p233) studied political protest on online networks as spaces which become valuable as a result of *connective actions* or the possibility of users to “finding common ground on platforms that are “easy-to-personalize” and share on their own terms and possibilities. A public may be considered as a value asset in relation to the possibility of gathering other users around content proposed by users from their own Facebook counts and using a network of connected accounts for distributing content.

SNS is a useful term, but it was not thought to consider the public contributions in the specific context of political campaigning and omitted two prominent features of Facebook which are key to analyse the process whereby value is materialised on this platform. The first omission is related to the lack of reference to constant quantification of users’ reactions to contents and the pervasive and public display of metrics. The second overlooked feature is the advertisement services, which is related to the monetisation of users’ data (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013) and the possibility of measuring a more elusive *attention economy* (boyd, 2010; Goldhaber, 1997; Rogers, 2004; Van Dijck, 2011).

The conceptualisation of an *attention economy* considers the users’ attention as a limited asset “over which information providers have to compete” (Engesser et al., 2017, p1285). For boyd (2010, p13) and Rogers (2004), the public attention is a commodity unequally distributed between some actors who catch most of it – such as big media organisations, celebrities, famous bloggers and politicians – and a large majority of users who are hardly listened to. boyd (2010) and Engesser et al. (2017) consider the users’ need of a

communication with others and the motivation of using Facebook to obtain a share in the *attention economy*. But, they do not mention the role of paid advertisements in subverting the dynamics of content circulation usually established by the users' interest in connecting with certain topics, brands and people.

Section 1.2 – Productive Public and value creation.

Arvidsson and Peitersen (2013, p49-50) have proposed the term *productive public* to conceptualise the emergence of value production out online platforms that is especially relevant for this thesis. They describe the digital affordances of a distinctive dynamic of production characterised by the loose gathering of individuals around a platform, which connects and provides them with a temporary direction for achieving a common goal or interest. In line with Jenkins' (2006) analysis of *participatory culture*, the lack of economic rewards and formal commitments in the activities of the users-producers of content can be described as a distinctive characteristic of the *productive publics*. Users are usually motivated by personal and a voluntary interest of being recognised – even distinguished as an expert in a specific area – as part of a group sharing a similar objective or ethos (Benkler, 2006; Bruns, 2006; Jenkins, 2006). A public may gather on a Facebook's page to voice their opinions on a candidate or discuss a political analysis on a party's policies, but most of them may not know each other. Inside the conceptualisation of this new form of production lays the recognition of loose types of associations among people. For example, in the case of a political campaign or protest, the short and intense interactions of users on a platform might disappear as soon as the political event is finished (Kavada, 2015; Milan, 2015).

The conceptualisation of such type of form of production can be traced back to the term *participatory culture* and the study of consumer of cultural goods in the 1960s counterculture actions of urban middle class who re-appropriated symbols for generating their own identities and rebelled against mass-consumption. However, the term "acquired its recent prevalence with the rise of what is known as a *Web 2.0*"⁴² (Arvidsson

⁴² The term Web 2.0 was coined by Tim O'Reilly (2005) to differentiate the advantages of software businesses models based on peer-production and the openness for collective collaboration. The term is loosely used to refer to a diverse range of online platforms which include the actions carried out by users for developing/ improving products and services – such as an explicit collaboration for amending a Wikipedia article to the unobtrusive modifications of Google's searching results based on algorithms and

and Peitersen, 2013, p60) and the materialisation of online platforms that provide “average consumers” with the possibility of an immediate and direct channel to share, re-signifying and re-circulate content (Jenkins, et al., 2009, p8). *Participatory culture*, is a useful concept to understand the dynamic of *productive publics*, has been described as:

“a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby experienced participants pass along knowledge to novices. In a participatory culture, members also believe their contributions matter and feel some degree of social connection with one another” (Jenkins et al., 2009, pxi).

A similar description was suggested by Levenshus (2010, p313) in his analysis of 2008 Obama’s grassroots campaign and the possibilities of low barriers for participation brought about was digital technologies. Cohen et al. (2011) and Jenkins (2012) proposed the term *participatory politics* to study the public’s involvement in political campaigns. Platforms such as Facebook allow users geographically widespread to have loose and informal involvement around their mutual interest in a political party or candidate, which it may be fostered by electoral competitions and charismatic leaders such as Obama in 2008 (Carlisle and Patton, 2013; Vitak et. al., 2011, p113).

The interest in connecting with other around specific common issues is crucial to understand this form of loose interactions facilitated by SNS. From the many users visiting a Party’s page some may be convinced supporters, but others may only want to find out more about the candidate or see what others are saying. They may simply increase the number of visits and content visualisations or create content on the page wall or/and recirculate posts via the Like or Share buttons. Their level of involvement vary significantly, but, they all contribute to build the page and provide campaign staff and supporters with a powerful incentive to encourage others participation (Levenshus, 2010; Vaccari, 2013). They may also be deeply committed with shared a political mission, but formal or close personal relationship are not necessarily involved in a *productive public* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p64).

users’ experiences. Several authors occasionally refer to social media and Facebook as Web 2.0 (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013; Gibson, and Ward, 2012; O’Reilly and Battelle, 2009; Vaccari, 2013).

To compare the notion of online communities with the conceptualisation of *productive publics* may be useful to clarify the latter term and provide a more detail terminology for the thesis. Community was considered by Nisbet (1953, p140) as one of the most vague and elusive forms to refer to a group used across many social sciences without a precise definition. This thesis does not pretend to settle down a long-standing debate around the concept, but it has found it useful to differentiate and think about diverse type of associations. A FA's Closed Facebook Group created to organise and discuss the creation of content could be considered closer to idea of an online community. Members belonged to the group because they had been recognised as a trusted fellow who contribute to achieve the party's goals. Similarly, each of them was recognisable and accountable to the others as a person whose intentions, position and activities could be shared and associated with a common political goal. If someone had expertise in making videos, this member could be contacted for editing and distributing the videos. For the ethnographic approach of this thesis, it was also important to observe how this online community also had an offline counter-part where interpersonal relationships could be reinforced (Hogan, 2010).

In line with Melucci (1995a, p44-5) and Arvidsson and Peitersen (2013, p93) the term community can be considered as part of a moving process in which aims, values and the limits between being and not being a member may change over time. Being a member of a community implies a sense of belonging to the group in which he or she feels responsible for the actions taken on behalf of this group. As a result, to be a member of FA community implies to be a supporter of the party and following other members with feelings that may involve happiness and regrets about the actions made by them as part of the same community.

The users' experiences on Facebook cannot be simply generalised or reduce to the conceptualisation of community and the concept of *productive publics* may adjust better to what is observed in many cases. In this latter case a group of strangers may be unified by a common interest that gathers them. Many Facebook users campaigning on Groups and Pages had very loose online connections and could be better described as part of a *productive public*. Facebook may provide users with a platform where a common goal is set, but it does not hold them in any formal manners (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p64-5). Conversely, a

community is not only demarcated by shared interests, but it is also a bounded well-defined group with an exclusive criterion for identifying members and outsiders (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p93).

The conceptualisation of *productive public* can be associated with two main schools of thoughts. On the one hand, it is rooted in branding studies and Gabriel De Tarde's work in economic sociology that recognised the association between the economic actions and the moral values and affective involvement of people with others thought objects. And, on the other hand, it can be traced back to the Marxist historic materialist approach to production and political economy theory that understands knowledge and intellectual production and source of value and contribution to the *general intellect*.

In agreement with the political nature of the second school, *general sentiment* might be understood as the basis for proposing a political manifesto for a bottom-up measurement system based on the public's involvement via online devices such as the Facebook's Like button. The authors consider SNS as unique opportunity for democratising the valuation of companies, organisations and political parties via the public participation. But, they also make a call for critically reviewing the usage of metrics potentially involved in measuring the public *general sentiment*; and recognise issues of measuring of public on privately owned companies, such as Facebook, which it remains unaccountable to the public and does not open up the back-end systems for data gathering and content circulation (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p110, p128).

For this thesis, the concept of *productive public* can be understood as a useful response to the public's involvement in the process of value creation brought about by the massive adoption of digital technologies. However, it is important to consider that it was not originally developed to analyse political campaign and its application to the study to specific practices needs to be considered carefully. This issues around the production of value within political campaigns are considered in following sections.

To understand the notion of value behind the conceptualisation of *productive publics*, it is necessary to introduce the idea of *general sentiment* rooted on De Tarde's (2011) theory of value and the sociological studies on the affective bonds of the public with brands as intangible assets (Lash and Lury, 2007). The recognition of emotion is a fundamental an element to understand people's participation on Facebook and

the creation of valuable information (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013; Gerbaudo, 2016; Grosser, 2014; Hogan, 2010; Papacharissi, 2014, p23). The notion of *general sentiment* is especially interest for this thesis because it has focused in the materialities that allow the objectification the public affective involvement. Arvidsson and Peitersen (2013, p117-20) mention different techniques whereby general sentiment can be measured. And they consider how *social buttons* in SNS allow “transforming intensive social and affective dynamics into comparable metrics by aggregating bottom-up expressions of affective proximity (I like or I don’t like) on the part of users” (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p120). These devices allow users to make one-click step connections that facilitate the low-threshold level of commitment of associated to *productive public* (boyd, 2010).

Facebook can be thought as a platform which simultaneously, fosters affective relationships and enables the measuring of public sentiments (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p116-7). As part of this analysis the massive adoption of Facebook may be thought of great relevance for thinking in the possibilities of a common “equivalent against which specific manifestations of affect can be evaluated, regardless of the concrete ideas or representations to which they are tied” (Arvidsson, 2012, p47).

The concept allows the recognition of two main forms of value creation in productive publics. The first one is related to the possibility to building a common equivalent with which the opinions and views of an otherwise unlinked multitude can be measured. *General sentiments* may be thought as mechanism to reach consensus in situations where the public holds multiple and sometimes conflicting forms of *orders of worth* (Stark, 2009) regarding a specific issue (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p106-7). It might be thought as way of finding a coherent interpretation for the direction of collective action of publics gathered around a common issue. The second form of value described by *general sentiment* is connected to the importance of influence, reputation and attention in *networked publics* (boyd, 2010). Here, value associated to *general sentiment* can be related to the recognition and the ability of a person or political party, to generate reactions and mobilise specific publics towards certain positions and objectives. Here, value is directly linked with the idea of reputation and the charisma of actors defined by Arvidsson and Peitersen as part of an *ethical capital* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p102).

To address the first form of value, it is useful to think of *general sentiment* as a form of bringing together the affective involved of spread and diverse users around a common point or issue. Behind this conceptualisation lays the idea of considering SNS as platform “whereby publics are able to abstract the concrete value judgements that particular members have and transform these judgements into comparable common substance or a “general equivalent that embodies the comprehensive judgement of the public itself” (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p92). The popularity of Facebook allows the creation of a medium where diverse groups can be found and compared through the use of universal measuring devices that brings together the opinions of different groups. Following Gerlitz and Helmond’s (2013) study of Facebook as a data central hub transcending particular connections, it is possible to analyse this SNS as a fabric stretching across the internet that enables the measuring of a general public affective to all kind of issues, including the public proximity to a party of candidate.

The second form of value is related to the concept of *ethical capital*, which understands the possibility of influencing in the dynamics of collective production as an asset. This approach considers that a critical mass of people can mobilised towards a goal by acting upon content to suggest what is relevant and worth of attention in a positive or not so positive manners (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p64-5). This second aspects also suggests the possibility of observing the collective and objectified involvement of the public with topics online, and recognises the issues around the individualisation and privatisation of ethical horizons. This is useful to understand what has been described as *echo chambers* and *filter bubbles*⁴³ and how people gather together in online groups, which represent their already formed opinions and views. This may lead to dynamics which reproduce existing positions and differences, that may be triggered an exacerbated by leaders and opinion makers.

However, Facebook may also described as platform that allow the co-existence multiple form of values or order of worth in (Stark, 2009) that enriches the site and the interaction. Helmond description of Facebook as a “multi-sided platform that connects users, advertisers, and third-party developers and experiences network effects” (2015, p2) is useful to start considering how the FA’s *productive public* may be composed

⁴³ This issue is briefly discussed below in this chapter’s section 2.3.

by different types of actors who are brought together to develop different things and might all collectively contribute to increasing the value of the platform. She studied Facebook from what is defined as a platform politics approach to focus on the economic model and materialities that supports the rise of a *participatory culture*. Her work pays special attention to the platform's Application Platform Interface (API) as a crucial component to explain the political and economic model of this platform. The API allows web developers and web administrators to expand Facebook's capacities and connectivity among different sites (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013). Helmond understands the site as an online sandbox where different users' involvements are crucial for adding value to the platform. The more users create content and interact on the site, the more value is created.

Section 1.3 – Facebook as a space for measuring the public.

This subsection reviews specific literature dedicated to the analysis of Facebook's devices that measure interactions and facilitates the valuation process. By considering specific literature on the use of social buttons and the term *audit culture*, the following pages aim at providing tools for analysing the measure of public's participation. This complements the description of social buttons provided in the first chapter and the already implicit recognition of measures as part of the valuation process. The social buttons are here analysed as mediators that facilitate certain types of interactions and have performative effects on an economy of attention and affection. A deeper analysis of the *audit culture* will be conducted in the fifth chapter in relation to the professional activities of the FA central campaign team and re-signified in the sixth chapter as part of the daily involvement of non-professional campaigners.

By following Lury and Marres' (2015) analysis of the importance of the environment and the devices operating in the valuation of objects, online media may be understood as a form of interaction which has a dual character. On the one hand, it provides means to create categories for observing and analysing objects. And, on the other hand, they also modify the observed object. The measuring of a political candidate in terms of a Klout Score, which synthesises the impact on several SNS, or the comparative analysis of Facebook's pages are part of practices involving evaluative exercises and objects categorisation that can trigger further actions (Gerlitz and Lury, 2014) in a campaign.

Espeland and Sauder's (2007) proposed the term *audit culture* to analyse how measurement and indicators have become crucial in all spheres of society. Audits and the activity of auditing are constantly used to monitor and make decisions based on collected information from indicators which reach political parties and politics in various forms such as public opinion polls. Espeland and Sauder analyse how "measures elicit responses from people who intervene in the objects they measure" (Espeland and Sauder, 2007, p2). Similarly, the constant measuring of public involvement was observed by Grosser (2014, p7) on Facebook and implicitly considered the implementation of popular audits conducted by users around the platform recording of responses via social buttons. He analyses how users understand their own performance on Facebook based on the number of Likes received from others. Being connected and recognised by others as someone worthy is part of a constant process of strengthening self-esteem – in Grosser's (2014, p2) psychological perspective and also as form of building *social capital* in Arvidsson and Peitersen (2013) or van Dijck's (2013, p202) sociological terms. To receive more Likes than a previous time is understood as synonym of improvement and being highly regarded by others.

A key aspect around the *audit culture* is the concept of *reactivity*, which was originally considered by Campbell (1957, p298) to depict methodological issues in social sciences. It understands that the act of measuring does not only observe an object, but it also changes it. On the one hand, the measurement orders and collocates objects – universities in a ranking or political parties in people's voting intentions –, and on the other hand, actors make decisions and act upon their own performances based on the results suggested by the auditing (Espeland and Sauder, 2007). Reactivity focuses on the blur limits between the act of measuring attributes and the changing of the object that is being observed. Measuring may be thought as an intervention on the object being counted, ordered and classify by methodologies and devices. It generates a dynamic of loops which shows the agency of metrics in a valuation process as well as the reflexivity of actors who rethink their relative positions with these objects. If the latest polls considered that a candidate is not seen as a good team player, the campaign strategy might change and include other party members in the next advertisements. The result of measurement affects the practices and relationship of those who are connected to object being evaluated (Bessy and Chauvin, 2013; Espeland and Sauder, 2007).

Facebook provides an infrastructure for quantifying public participation and sentiments around any type of topic, but the valuation of such interactions with content can be described as medium-specific (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013, p24-5). Political consultants, campaign managers and supporters may see elections as goal-directed contests “with rivals for particular rewards, for example, control of issue agendas, share of the vote, or ultimately electoral victory” (Scammell, 2014, pxviii). They try to understand the mood of the public, what is appealing to them and predict their behaviour (Gerodimos and Justinussen, 2014; Scammell, 2014).

What determines “value in situation of information abundance seems to be the ability to create consensus, however transitory, that can give direction and coherence to collective interpretation and action” (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p45). And, devices that measure the public’s interest in real time might be especially praised in tight electoral scenarios where a key percentage of voters can be unsure and highly volatile with regarding to their voting decisions. By following Lury and Marres (2015), it is possible to argue that valuation practices on the FA’s Facebook campaign are connected to the need of predicting and providing clarity about the public mood and political interests. Capturing the unexpected and being able to identify what is important or could potentially make significant difference is regarded as an asset in uncertainty scenarios.

A practical tacit or explicit consensus regarding the used measuring tools and a framework is also required for the emergence of value and valuation processes (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p107; Moor and Lury, 2011, p451; Stark, 2009). Value production also requires a specific medium such as Google, where an interpretation for creating a ranking based on links and users’ activity can be considered useful and trustful (Rogers, 2004; Vaidhyanathan, 2012).

Here, the loose nature of Facebook’s connections also needs to be considered in relation to the ambiguity of social buttons described in the first chapter. Clicking a button may indicate many different things for different users⁴⁴ and the simplification of different expressions behind the counting cannot be easily extrapolate to other contexts. Its intensity is difficult to calculate and cannot be simply and directly translated in to voters’ intentions (Vaccari, 2013, p116-7; Vitak, et al., 2011, p113) or predict other forms of political

⁴⁴ Social buttons are sometimes designed not only to make a connection, but also to collect wider information about the user general online behaviour.

participation. These limitations have been recognised in the field of political communication (Carlisle and Patton 2013; Davis, 2010; DiJulio and Wood, 2008; Metaxas et. al., 2011) and reviewed in the following section.

Gerlitz and Helmond's (2013) analysis of Facebook from a perspective of information politics and economy is useful to think in the specific devices that may facilitates the auditing of the public. Facebook creates a web-fabric that extends across the whole internet and measure pages with standardised units provided by social buttons. Gerlitz and Helmond (2013), Lury and Marres (2015) and Wilson, et al. (2012, p214) considered the Facebook's Like Button as a device for content syndication that allows the transit of information into value. It sets up a common frame for the de-centralisation and re-centralisation⁴⁵ of information about users who endorsed contents or pages with a pre-established one-click positive response. This device generates a dynamic of content flow which is at the core of Facebook's mechanism to sort and recommend information.

The conceptualisation of online traffic and the Likes Button as a form of currency (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2011, p11) is also a provocative idea to consider the aforementioned attention economy and ethical capital. The button measures the content's capacity to generate responses from other users by adding a unit of value that can be considered as a general equivalent for all content and pages on Facebook. This provides the opportunity to make comparison among different content and pages as well as variations across time. In doing so, the social buttons not only allow the quantification of the public affective involvement, but they also have a performative action of making different actors and interests comparable with a general unit of value.

All Social buttons display the interaction with content by showing the number and names of users who engaged with it and allow "cross-syndication and sharing of content across social media" (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2011, p6). By clicking the buttons, users' activities are tracked, linked to content and pages and included in a recommendation system (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013, p8). This orders contents and accounts

⁴⁵ The platform enables to cross-syndicate content not only in one platform, but also across platforms such as an online newspaper article posted on a Facebook page or any type of external websites.

in a ranking of visibility for other users whose connections may be traced with links. The combination of a public display of names and the algorithm based on connectivity work as a form of content accreditation and recommendation among user, which it encourages and fosters affective responses and more participation (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013, p7).

Valuations are not fixed but the result of processes open to diverse interpretations that can destabilise the value of an object (Callon et al., 2002, Espeland and Sauder; 2007; Stark, 2009). *Social buttons* may be conceptualised as intermediaries which propose “cognitive categories and values that order goods, people and organizations” (Bessy and Chauvin, 2013, p85) which are used to considered particular measured phenomena. In line with Callon (1990, p140) and Bessy and Chauvin (2013, p95) definition of intermediaries, *social buttons* perform actions in which the intervening users and content is subject to specific form of treatment. Metrics are redeployed in the production of indexes, ratings and rankings, which are open to multiple forms of sometimes competing interpretations.

From the campaigners’ pragmatic point of view, the addition in the number of Likes may be seen as form of incrementing the value of a topic and the party’s *ethical capital*. In doing so, the button does not only count the numbers of responses, but it also has a performative effect in establishing how much of a public’s interest can be gathered and develop around issues and pages. This may generate comparisons and temporary settlements regarding the value of different contents, but it may also prompt a constant search and competition with other parties for obtaining more connections with users.

A final issue related to the translation and translocation of measurement into an electoral competition is related to the emergence of an *attention economy* and reputation around content. These practices have been conceptualised by Rogers (2004) as part of an economy of attention in which websites were competing to occupy the highest position in term of visits. This fostered the development of an advertisement industry and other type of paid services to manipulating content circulation and visibility. The use of Click Farms, companies that sell packages of Facebook’s Likes to increase the popularity and visibility of a page or topic for money, poses questions regarding the legitimacy of such forms of measuring value (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013, p12; Mares and Gerlitz, 2014, p22). The actors’ different possibility for paying advertisement and

influence the content circulation questions the possibility of peer form of value production associated with equal opportunities and the association between Likes and genuine users. The business models based on an *attention economy* influenced by monetary resources needs to be included in the equation. What supposed to be a platform for open participation among peers may generate different hierarchies and differentiation based on principles and attributes not equally distributed.

Section 2 – Productive Publics and political campaigns: *A different dynamic in public involvement and political communication.*

Section 2.1 – The 2008 Obama campaign: A milestone in political communication.

The 2008 Obama's campaign has been recognised as a milestone in the application of online technologies for enhancing online participation and considered as a crucial reference in the field political communication by several authors (Barnard and Kreiss, 2013, p2046; Carlisle and Patton 2013; Castells, 2009, p366; Gerodimos and Justinussen, 2014, p5; Gibson, 2009; Gibson and Ward, 2012; Gulati and Williams, 2012, p1; Levenshus, 2010, p313). SNS provided Obama's supporters with spaces where they could contribute to campaign in their own time and terms (Vitak, et al., 2011; Vaccari, 2010; 2013) as a *productive public*. And it also allowed politicians like Donal Trump to influence the production of news and broadcast information directly and immediately without the filters, checking and demands hold by professional journalists and traditional news organisations (Engesser et al., 2017, p1283). But, to understand why the Obama campaign gained such notorious reputation, it may be helpful to consider the analytical focus on technology as a driver of paradigm changes provided by political communication scholar such as Davis (2010), Plasser and Plasser (2002) and Scammell (2014).

This Obama campaign needs to be associated with a specific time in the USA and a cultural change in the attitudes and practices of both the public and party staff who invested time and resources in campaigning online (Scammell, 2014). Only in the late 2000s the means for considering Internet a new different

“mainstream medium of communication” (Castells, 2009, p390) were available. And, despite of the innovative online practices developed for the 2004 Howard Dean’s campaign, it was the Obama’s enthusiastic and winning campaign the one which received an unprecedented attention and the credits for fostering political participation (Castells, 2009, p389; Hara, 2008).

Facebook become a facilitator of a distinctive form of interaction between politicians and voters and among party supporters which changed completely the main communicational model supported by traditional mass media in the beginning of the 20th century. That model was originally associated with the idea of propaganda⁴⁶ and based on the broadcasting from a few senders (national radio station and national newspapers) to the masses envisioned in the ideal references such as The Nation or The people. This was mostly understood as a model directly or indirectly involved in warfare policies and national states using broadcasters to mould the opinion of audiences who received vertically organised information (Voss, 1994). Similarly, the audience was considered as consumers around specific appealing ideologies that mighty parties included into an equation to calculate to what extent their parties and candidates could mobilise supporters.

The massive adoption of online technologies has been seen as change in media landscape marked by the immediateness and easiness to circulate content among a network of users who received and broadcast information. This fitted the political branding that replaced the propaganda’s vertical and unidirectional model with an approach that understands online users as active actors in a continuous process of producing a campaign. The branding approach aims to maximise the chances for supporters to identify themselves with the party messages and candidates. And the content co-created by the public is considered as a tool for constantly gathering information and shaping the campaign and political agenda. The use of techniques for measuring opinions and feelings can be tracked throughout the 20th century development of marketing

⁴⁶propaganda as field of study in first half of the 20th century. However, the study of propaganda has nowadays been relegated and consider as part of historical studies of warfare and totalitarian regimes (Scammell, 2014, p14). From the 1980s the recurrent use of the term ‘political marketing’ in academic literature associated to figures such as Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and the UK New Labour among other parties indicated the raise of a general consensus regarding a shift in political communications practices (Scammell, 2014, p29).

techniques (Arvidsson, 2006; Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013; Gerlitz, 2013; Lury, 2004; Moor and Lury, 2011). But, SNSs revolutionised the possibility of following the everyday voluntary involvement of people with issues and brands (Gerodimos and Justinussen, 2014; Levenshus, 2010).

As a result, an analysis of the policy of information, the emergence of a branding model has been seen as a movement in the production of information from organisations' managerial staff to the public (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p53; Scammell, 2014). This does not mean that the audience has the power over a political party or a brand, but that the branding approach followed by companies and organisations has evolved to consider and include the public's views for their continuous involvement in brands' evolution (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013; Gerlitz, 2013; Lash and Lury, 2007). Branding may be considered as a process that includes constant research and searching interests and issues to increase the opportunities for supporters to identify themselves with candidates and parties and get them involved as part of a multiple broadcasting sources of information.

SNS added an extra layer of identification and re-signification of parties' images, which consider the power of users in generating and circulating content in a network where many broadcasts to many. This provided the possibility to escalate content to a potentially large audience (Miller et al., 2016, p3) – especially if this information is replicated by online celebrities or taken by large media outlets (Gillespie, 2013). Digital technologies and branding approaches have contributed in making marketing campaigns non-linear and influenced by the participation of different actors who co-created and reconfigured (Gerlitz, 2013; Lash and Lury, 2007) the course of brand strategies with their active participation.

Following Gerodimos and Justinussen's (2014, p21) analysis of the Obama campaign, the 'Yes, we can' slogan can be thought as part of this shift, which included a familiar language and personalised messages and adverts for encouraging participation and creating a sense of belonging around the candidate and party's messages. The message was more than a catchy phrase following political marketing recommendations. It was also able to bring forward part of a well-rooted USA cultural need of calling for hope during hard times and the 2008 economic crisis (Enfield, 2008; Hodges, 2014) and help building a

sense of belonging based on the image of the campaign as a collective and open process for making a change (Tkacz, 2015, p2).

The negative side of viral content for campaigner is related to what Gibson and Ward (2012, p64) call the risky of allowing multiple voices appropriate the message of a party and talk on its name. In line with this idea Gerodimos and Justinussen (2014, p28) described a rigid centralised management on the 2012 Obama's Facebook page with a policy of no dialogue. Similarly, Vaccari (2010, p321) considered the problem the proliferation of messages as potential source of over-communication and miscommunications, including false information that could produce negative effects for one group, but beneficial for others trying to damage the reputation of opponents.

However, in line with the analysis of Castells (2009; 2012); Carlisle and Patton (2013) Gerodimos and Justinussen (2014), it is important to recognise that political participation is not a direct consequence of a technological innovation. The majority of Facebook's users are not interested in partisan activities and the increasing level of online participation during the 2008 Obama's campaign needs to be considered as part of a larger phenomenon including: the Democratic machinery; the charisma of the presidential candidate that was also able to target disenchanted and new voters with a powerful message of hope and political renovation (Castells, 2009, p364-6).

For professional political marketing analysts and campaigners, the Obama's campaign was a pragmatic success in using "the Internet to empower, dialogue with, and build mutually beneficial relationships with the public" (Levenshus, 2010, p333). Online media provided the campaign with a space where a different form of participation content production was able to crystallise. The massive adoption of Facebook provided users with specific *affordances* (Benkler, 2006) to foster interaction and a distinctive dynamic for the circulation and co-production of content that was conceptualised as a novel form of engagement (Castells, 2009, p364-372; Levenshus, 2010).

In the context of the 2008 Obama campaign, Facebook pages were considered as part of strategy to attract responses from the public to increase the credibility of the candidate (Vaccari, 2013, p123). The *ethical*

capital, to use Arvidsson and Peitersen term, of the candidate and party could be measured as an asset in the capacity of generating a reaction in a network of users. Facebook provided users with an opportunity to express their interests and hope in the candidate, and in doing so, supporters also spread content among their own networks of contacts and used their own *ethical capital* to endorse politicians and influence others. Vitak, et al. noticed that online relationships with peers on Facebook may be “a more powerful incentive to engage in political activity (...) than more generic messages sent from a candidate to users” (Vitak, et al., 2011, p109). Peers add a powerful affective component that may help to build sense of belonging or duty in the people. The Obama campaign team took advantage of Facebook for harnessing their followers’ support and actively encouraged users to connect their personal profiles with the candidate’s site. For this approach, individual users, whose ability to influence others is average, may temporarily go in the same direction and create an influential critical mass and a qualitative change in a public’s sentiments.

However, the potential of measuring the public’s interest also needs to be contrasted with other ideas regarding the value of online participation. Carlisle and Patton (2013); Gerodimos and Justinussen (2014); Lutz (2009) and Vitak et. al. (2011) have recognised different levels of online political involvement. Professional campaigners and political marketing consultants recognise that “In general, political activities on Facebook such as writing a politically themed status update or joining a political group on the site are not resource intensive, as they require little time or effort from the user” (Vitak, et al., 2011, p109). In line with the aforementioned low-threshold of *participatory cultures*, it is possible to observe major differences between offline political participation and the commitments required for political participation on Facebook.

To illustrate this issue regarding *general sentiment* and the distance between online and offline practices, the concepts of *slacktivism* (Morozov, 2011) and *clicktivism* (Jenkins, 2012) may be useful. A typical example of *slacktivism* refers to users clicking a button on a SNS and feeling that they have done enough to support a political cause. As a result, their political involvement stops at the minimum level of one click commitment without any further actions. In Morozov’s (2011, p180-1) words, it is “feel-good online activism that has zero political or social impact. It gives those who participate in *slacktivits* campaigns an illusion of having a meaningful impact on the world without demanding anything more than joining a Facebook group”.

Similar cases are discussed by Carlisle and Patton (2013); Rogers (2013b) and Vitak, et al. (2011) who have found that online participation is mostly related to the search for information and “low in resource intensity (e.g., watching a debate), whereas political actions that required a greater commitment of resources (e.g. volunteering) were less frequent” (Vitak, et. al., 2011, p112).

Section 2.2 – SNS as political marketing tools for measuring the public.

The academic interest in the use of metrics in online political campaigns varies significantly from the analysis of best practices in advertisement (Barnard and Kreiss, 2013, p2050-1; Grow and Ward, 2013; Vaccari, 2013), to the possibility of fostering civic empowerment (Gerodimos and Justinussen, 2014; Levenshus, 2010). Metrics have mostly been analysed from secondary sources and the practitioners’ narration of their performances. They observe the phenomena from the perspective of political parties in developed country and do not problematize the agency of online metrics and the process thereby value can be produced out of these metrics. Gerbaudo (2014a; 2016), Gerodimos and Justinussen’s (2014) direct observation and critical analysis of metrics are rare cases in political communication studies.

There is no general consensus regarding the value of existing metrics and no standard forms of measuring. The possibility of using metrics form SNS to analyse entire political phenomena has been severely criticised (Carlisle and Patton, 2013; Metaxas et. al., 2011; Morozov, 2011; Rogers, 2013b; Wilson et. al., 2012). But, online metrics and the evaluations around public engagement and responses remains open to the intervention of practitioners. The recognition of online metrics as valid tools occurs in a specific environment and networks of actors who justify their usage with arguments and empirical practices.

Following Plasser and Plasser (2002, p32, p83), Scammell (2014) and the views of Uruguayan academics on the political campaign summarised by Cohen (2014), it is important to understand that the level of professionalisation and communication styles outside ‘developed countries’ may be very different. Observations on the use of online media for the Obama’s campaign cannot be easily imported to other political environments. Gibson and Ward (2012) observe that SNS may receive limited attention and use outside Europe and North America because of managerial understandings and candidates’ personal views

on these technologies. Online media may be disregarded as secondary and less important channels of communication. In short, the use of online metrics for political campaigning can be recognised as a useful approach for the valuation process of a political campaign in certain environments that vary from one case study to another. Similarly, multiple forms of valuation based on the same platforms and available metrics may apply different criterion and arrived to diverse results sustained by built in-house systems.

However, the ethnographic approach of this thesis needs to pay attention to the use of Facebook by professional marketers who use and frame SNS as effective tools for analysis the public and their responses to content (Barnard and Kreiss, 2013; Gerodimos and Justinussen, 2014; Levenshus, 2010). The possibility of a continuous and real-time measuring of the public's responses to content is a crucial component to understand the value of Facebook in context of great uncertainty. These practices are conducted by a group of specialists who built up their own reputations as experts in online campaign management (Davis, 2010; Scammell, 2014). They used existing methods such as cluster analysis and network analysis to develop digital tools for micro-targeting, narrowcast advertising, direct marketing techniques on Facebook (Barnard and Kreiss, 2013; Gibson and Ward, 2012; Vaccari, 2010; 2013). By claim expertise and the advantages of digital technologies, they were able to justify the importance of using Facebook for political campaigning and sell their services (Plasser and Plasser, 2002; Scammell, 2014, p64). Campaign managers, political supporters and candidates usually have a clear main goal which needs to be realised in broad institutional contexts and official commitments outside a specific online media which include national electoral results and commercial interests. And the use of metrics can be understood as intellectual organisers, which pre-suppose a previous analysis on what is central for the campaign and how to measure it (Scammell, 2014, Chapter 5).

Network analysis technics are typically used to calculating and identifying influencers or, in other words "people who have a central position in relational networks and communication flows, and who are therefore 'worth more' as communication channels" Arvidsson (2012, p51). An example of such practices can be found in companies considering the numbers provided by indicators like the Klout Score – generated by measuring SNS account impacts' – as a guideline for making decisions regarding the need of differential

treatment and attention to diverse customers (Gerlitz and Lury, 2014) or political marketing approaches that consider key influencers, such as celebrities or notable figures. These *reputation metrics* “are backed by a broad coalition of actors – from traditional corporations via media companies and Web start-ups to alternative publics and activists’ networks” (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p123).

Slacktivism can be understood as a negative response given by those interested in analysing and evaluating the SNS to foster democracy. But, this interpretation of online activism can be limited and does not allow observing the distinctive impact and nature of *productive publics* in politics. Using *slacktivism* might lead to a radical dualist analysis of what is meaningful and meaningless actions from a pre-established benchmark that already pre-consider online political activities as capable of bringing substantive and radical democratic changes. To think about activity on Twitter in the specific context of the 2009 Iran Election or the Arab Spring as slacktivism (Fuchs, 2014; Gaffney, 2010; Rogers, 2013, p3) may be a form of bringing back and rejecting previous unsupported evidences that considered SNS as capable of unleashing a social revolution. This view overlooks the actual changes and specificities enacted by platforms such as Twitter or Facebook.

Section 2.3 - Online media and populism.

SNS have also been recently studied in relation to the idea of fake news and populism (Engesser et al., 2017; Groshek and Koc-Michalska, 2017). This debate mostly focused on the impact of these platforms in the democratic system and term populism has been conspicuously used to analysis the faults, limitations and threats of it (Norris and Grömping, 2017, p9-10). But, the term ⁴⁷ has been contested (Arditi, 2004; Engesser et al., 2016, p1; Mudde, 2004) and considered as a very vague conceptualisation for describing many diverse politicians and political groups. Said this, the debate around populism online and the spread

⁴⁷ The term populism has been criticised for being too wide and catch all kind of modern political parties. This describes a discourse in which a general and abstract definition ‘The People’ is described as the true sobering of country or “The Nation” which is being harmed and deceived by an elite (politicians and their allies in the large news organisations, international corporations closing down national factories, bankers, etc.) who are taken the virtues and right of the people for their benefits. Some of the features described as populist does not describe well the dynamic of the FA after 10 years in government and following party congress decision above any rhetorical of immediateness and directness in the communication between the leader and the people. A brief discussion of this term is provided by Engesser et al. (2017), Engesser et al. (2016) and Mudde (2004).

of opinions and information on SNS can be useful to analyse the development of certain type of interactions during political campaigns on Facebook.

The review and special issue on online populism by Engesser et al. (2017) describes how SNSs fit well with populist communication logic and generate a more direct channel between leaders and the people (Engesser et al., 2017, p1280). The conceptualisation of a populism recognises a logic in which a politician or political group claims to be the truly representative of the people against a corrupt and selfish elite and an alien groups (foreigners, religious minorities, etc.) that are damaging and taken away the rights and natural virtues of the people. An increasing apathy among citizens in most western democracy has been described Davis (2010) and associated with a process of increasing gap between political elites and voters. The raise of populism can be associated with the public perception of the need for a drastic political change and the opportunistic logic of the populists who promises to be the carrier of a direct solution and different from the insensible institutions, damaging alien interests and selfish elites.

Engesser et al. (2017) associate the populist discourse with the simplification of problems and arguments that considers necessary a direct link between the people and leadership to provide the people with their sovereign power. A plain language is then needed to show the he or she is their voice and real representative, and the use of strong and spectacular messages (i.e. building a massive wall, expel all criminals, reject foreign people) considered to catch the attention on and overload informational environment with high competition around attention (Engesser et al., 2017, p1286). SNSs provide leaders such as Donald Trump with personalized channels that circumvent the filter of journalists and allow “freedom for the use of strong language when attacking the elites and ostracizing others” (Engesser et al., 2016, p15). The use of a direct and highly emotional language is considered as part of a strategy to mobilizing and gain the support masses who are not political affiliated but may be attracted by a direct and power message that promises a real political change. By doing so, politicians may be able to exert a communication style and charisma that show them as brave leaders how are the true voice of the people for saying what others are too compromised or unable to do so.

Similarly, the universal accessibility and possibility to broadcasting content outside the regulations of news corporations help to create an image of the Facebook user and the politician on SNSs as “non-elite actors” who are not aligned with those corporatist and elitist interests that the populist claim to fight against (Engesser et al., 2017, p1283). Facebook may be perceived as an alternative media that accompanies well the image of the politician as someone who rises from the people and allows creating counter-opinion groups.

Another aspect of Facebook that fits well with the populist logics is related to participatory imaginary (Gerbaudo, 2015, p81) of the internet users as active members for a potential direct democracy. The populism has been associated with a courageous leader who denounces political status quo as part of a complicated system where the embedded interests of a minority are unable to provide responses to people demands (Laclau, 2006; Mudde, 2004; Gerbaudo, 2015, p85). Despite previous observation regarding the political apathy of most people, Facebook is visualised in the public imaginary and the populist discourse as a means for direct democracy and eradication of those corrupted intermediaries. (Gerbaudo, 2015, p78). The actual capacity of users to post and share content on Facebook fits well the idea of technological transformational promise in which the common isolated and ignored people have now the possibility of an instrumental collective action for that SNSs come to offer and the populist party or leader aims to embody.

Similarly, Rubio (2013, p147-9) agrees with the increasing use of digital technologies for political participation in Uruguay as a result of an increasing distance between the people’s aspirations and the responses provided by the left-wing parties. He associated the rise of charismatic leaders in Uruguay with the people’s urgent need for response. And, as it was suggested in the last section of the first chapter, the increasing use of Facebook may be as part of the search and hope for new spaces where their demands and mobilisation may be seen and listened to.

The idea of news fabrication and the distribution of deceiving information was a central topic during the 1930’s in the USA (Scammell 2014, p14-6). The Institute for the Analysis of Propaganda analysed how newspapers and radio could spin around political interest and corporate cultures, but they also included editorial guidelines, trusted sources, informational checking that work as news gatekeepers (Tumber, 1999). Nowadays, Facebook and other SNSs generate a different dynamic for producing and accessing content in

which users, including political leaders, can voice their views directly to other without the filters and barriers traditional hold by journalists (Engesser et al., 2017, p1283). The lack of established professional mechanism to control the source and veracity of information and the speed of the interactions on Facebook may facilitate the circulation of fake information on this type of media.

The publication of digital modified picture of the FA closing campaign act on the 26 October 2014 – mentioned in the first chapter – is just an example of this novel dynamic of content circulation in which the fast multiplication of channels for content production are not paired with what could have been described as healthy and necessary control of the information for preventing the embarrassment of FA campaigners⁴⁸. Someone intentionally modified the picture of the final act, but the easiness of circulating and posting content with a single-click and the need of communicating the successful demonstration as soon as possible made the publication of an altered picture more feasible. In what is described as a dynamic of *filter bubbles* (Engesser et al., 2017, p1284), Facebook may create spaces where users receive content which is pre-selected by other users who are trusted as political fellows working towards the same goal as a *productive public*. Beyond the real intentions and knowledge of the FA campaign officer, in these filtered bubbles people may be keener to believe and trust in content sent by other members.

Facebook has also been considered as a medium where users are fragmented and tied to personal networks with people who think similarly and “closed off” from others who may have different opinions. For boyd (2010, p14) networked publics might only reproduce political divisions: “even when content scales in visibility, it may not cross socio-political divisions”. Woolley, et al. (2010, p648) also suggest that SNS provide users with channels where they usually reinforce and express their own beliefs without engaging in discussion with others. According to these latter authors, Facebook might not be widening pluralism, but creating a polarisation between close partisan views. Online groups may play back the same political arguments and cultivate a political homophily (Engesser et al., 2017, p1284) in spaces where there are no real discussions,

⁴⁸ See the epigraph in the first chapter for a description of that particular situation.

but similar arguments are confirmed and amplified the same views (Downey and Fenton, 2003, p189) as in an *echo chamber* (Vaccari, 2013).

Benkler et al. (2017) also found a network that circumvented traditional media and worked as a right-wing filter bubble in their study of links shared by Donald Trump supporters on Facebook and Twitter, but they disagree with idea of internet as a driver of fragmentation. Similarly, Benkler et al. (2017); Castells (2009); Vaidhyathan (2012) and Sweney (2014) provide evidence of the existence of a shared media and large news organisation that still concentrate big shares of the *attention economy*. Similarly, the possibility replicating and escalating the same content across different media rejects this idea of an absolute close informational spaces. Their analysis on Hillary Clinton's campaign showed that Facebook does not necessarily creates filter bubbles. In agreement with Benkler (2006), they challenged a simplistic and deterministic approach to the internet as cause of fragmentation per se. Benkler et al. (2017) analysis suggests that this fragmentation is more likely to occurred because of politics and culture forms of interaction than due to technological causes along. Some people may move in close informational micro-environment, but others have developed a more plural and dynamic behaviour as a result of their internet access (Benkler, 2006, Davis 2010).

Section 2.4 – Collective Identity and alternative forms of political participation.

Since the Arab Spring SNSs and political activities have also been part of a prolific debates around rise of social movements and the possibility of a political change. In line with the study of an electoral campaign, Facebook was considered as alternative form of participation in the previous section and in chapter one, but this analysis moved around how political parties and supporters could be listened and campaign for a party. The study of social movements online is part of multiples debates that consider wide range of different phenomena (Aguiar, 2012) which reflect on diverse types of practices, political aims and moral values. In lines with Kavada (2015) analysis of the Occupy Movement, contemporary social movements seem to be characterised for the demands for a more inclusive and direct democracy linked to online participation as feasible means for that end. The idea of an expanding democracy seems to be partially aligned with the observations on chapter four about some of the groups supporting the FA's senator Constanza Moreira.

But, this may not describe the core values and practices of a campaign for a party already established in government. Melucci (1989; 1995b) describes how social movements pursue their goals by interacting with politicians and government in a grey area outside the predefined political system. His analysis reveals how social movement overlap, complement and compete with the political establishment in spaces where parties cannot access directly, but social movements do⁴⁹. For this thesis, Gerbaudo (2014; 2016) and Kavada (2015) introduction of Melucci's (1995a) conceptualisation of *collective identity* in the analysis of social movements is especial useful.

Gerbaudo (2016) studied Facebook as an emotional catalysts and generator of enthusiasm among participants of the 2011 Occupy Movements, Spanish protests and the Egyptian uprising. In those contexts, Facebook was considered as powerful channel to demonstrate discontent and a platform for utopian promises for transforming politics and direct democracy. He also considered the importance of two different components in movements associated with grassroots digital democracy. On the one hand, these groups put an emphasis on qualitative aspects of building up participation around the idea of an inclusive community that make changes to the political system. To be part of the Occupy Movement or Indignados in Spain was related to the idea of re-founding of democracy with direct forms of participation with meaningful actions associated with values solidarity, fighting inequality and making a sustainable system. On the other hand, Gerbaudo (2016) also considers the metrification of participation as an important aspect of the dynamic of these groups that measure the resources and outcomes for achieving a goal.

“Twitter and Facebook have acquired the role of an informal voting system, operating on the principle of ‘one like, one vote,’ (...) Activists I interviewed in Spain, Egypt and the U.S. agreed that the response of Internet users constituted for them an indicator of their support for a certain course of action or a certain message” (Gerbaudo, 2015, p82-3).

The use of Facebook indicators to make valuations on the performances of political groups is crucial component for analysing participation on this platform. And, Gerbaudo's observations are in agreement with

⁴⁹ To consider the actual complexity of real phenomena, it is important to mention that parties of masses may been seen and analysed as multiple groups with a strong tie to social movements or the institutionalised part of a movement (Aguiar, 2012, p52-3, p58).

the idea of *culture audit* in which the recognition of value and decisions are made based on a constant process of measuring participants involved in specific tasks and goals. However, after reviewing the multivalence and ambiguity of Facebook indicators⁵⁰ and the issues around their use to understand political process, this thesis suggests that the process whereby these metrics are used in valuations needs to be examined in more detail and with specific examples.

The term *collective identity* may allow the researcher to focus on the interactions of actors as part of a moving process where tensions and negotiations are part of a complex system of actions. The concept may be considered as a methodological tool elaborated by Melucci (1995b, p4-5) to approach and deconstruct social movements in his theorisation of collective action. It understands identity as a moving 'identization' that requires to be empirically study in the statements codified as texts, conversations and reactions to practices (Kavada, 2015, p879). They encapsulate the values and views that members materialise in their statement to establish the boundaries, interests and goals of the group. And in doing so, a necessary process of making internal differences –such as radical left-wing positions versus moderates – and opposition to external groups – such as the traditional parties – is defined in a field of action where values are negotiated. In line with the description of the FA as coalition of several left-wing groups, the concept is very useful to recognise how multiple actors are able to the co-existence and sustain a lasting unity despite of their internal tension and external pressures (Melucci, 1995a, p44). Moreover, collective identity recognises the existence of difference and heterogeneity of interest and points that needs to be articulated and negotiated in collective actions of political groups.

Another key aspect of the term is the recognition of emotions as irreducible component of identity and collective actions. Melucci (1996, p71) considers necessary to incorporate the emotional component into the analysis of political groups. He understands that some aspects of the identity are related to emotional experience of participants that may not be open to debate or a negotiation. Some attributes at some specific time may be seen as absolute boundaries that exclude those who are outside – such as those considered as a greedy minority –; and a bonding component that creates a sense of community with peers struggling

⁵⁰ See the second section of chapter 1.

for the same goal, such as a more equalitarian society. Following up the post in the epigraph of the first chapter, the emotional reaction of FA supporter to the picture of the final campaign act allowed observing how he connected his family history with the FA and showed a sense of belonging that goes beyond rational choice. Melucci includes in the notion of time in the conceptualisation of *collective identity* as part of open and moving processes (1996, p77) that actors carried out for the achievement of goals. The term supposes a sense of causality and belonging that actors articulated in relation to a system of symbolic orientations and meanings. The actions of social movements are associated with a message and models for interactions that suggest what is to be followed or acknowledge by the rest of the society and actors involved in the political field of action. The FA required supporters to vote and proposed a political agenda with organised society around a position and values related to inclusion and social democracy. Similarly, Melucci analysis of social movement considers resources are as part of a negotiation with different actors outside and inside of the political group. Actor evaluate the process and interactions with others in relation the appropriation of material outcomes of oriented actions (Melucci, 1995a, p46). This description of *collective identity* as a process that involves the actors' self-reflexivity fits well with the analysis of reactivity enabled by metrics. Political groups on Facebook measured targets – obtain more supporters, winning the elections – to understand how well or bad were performing and act upon their own activities and the objects targeted.

Section 3 – Defining the process of valuation

This section considers three theories and general definitions on valuation that facilitate an explorative approach of the multiple types of activities and interests of the research participants involved in the FA's Facebook Pages. Graeber (2001, p1) has already mentioned the enormously wide and diverse use of the term value in his literature review on different conceptualisations provided in social sciences. This thesis has no space to pursue such encyclopaedic task, but it has already specified the field in which is interested by introducing the definition of *productive publics*. In this section, the selection of a theory on valuation is aimed at providing the thesis with a broad conceptualisation and tools for guiding the empirical observation on how value emerge as a result of the interactions of different actors in specific contexts.

The recognition of the environment, context and a problematic situation as constitutive parts of valuation process is one of the main reasons to include the theories of Dewey (1939), Boltanski and Thévenot (1999) and Goffman (1986) in this chapter. Dewey's recognition on how "the content and object of desires are seen to depend upon the particular context in which they arise, (...) personal activity and of surrounding conditions" (1939, p16) is in line with an ethnographic approach aimed at grasping the specific circumstances and meanings of interaction. Similarly, the theories of Boltanski and Thévenot; and Goffman are well fitted for the observation of multiple and possible frames and conflicts around an object in a specific situation (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1999, p364-5). By looking at these theories, the existence of different positions on the process of valuation is already considered. This "takes place only when there is something the matter; when there is some trouble to be done away with, some need, lack, or privation to be made good, some conflict of tendencies to be resolved by means of changing existing conditions" (Dewey, 1939, p34). This conceptualisation is instrumental for developing an analysis that considers tensions among actors as a special opportunity for observing the systems of meaning and actions for the enactment of valuations. When a conflict is explicitly embodied by actors, they need to state and justify the discourses and mechanism that support or challenge a situation (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006).

Dewey's conceptualisation of the process of valuation requires a distinction between means, ends and circumstances. The end or goal is something on which actors can operate on and modify with less or more success and described as reachable or unreachable in relation to specific available or unavailable resources and means. Valuations are also attached to a context and specific actors' criteria that provide meaning and criteria to justify actions according to available resources and specific needs in certain time. Even if this is based on personal beliefs and false arguments, valuation it is an end-oriented process that involves an "expenditure of energy" to avoid adverse conditions, maintain a position or achieving what is wanted (Dewey, 1939, p14-5). The recognition of value is always related to a particular group who make use of certain resources and channels for directing the actions to try obtaining specific results (Dewey, 1939, p17). They could be bankers trying to avoid taxes on monetary transactions and mentioning in their lobby in the congress about the importance of financial activities for a vibrant economy. Or they could be politicians

talking on the media to convince the people that they are the only ones that can implement economic policies for an economic recovery.

Dewey's theory is very relevant for this thesis as a general theory for an empirical approach to valuations than can be apply to all kinds of human actions that are planned is subject to rules and norms for judging the value of the conducted activity. For him the activity of valuation generates relations between means and ends to estate if the behaviour was "wise or unwise, economical or extravagant, effective or futile" (Dewey, 1939, p21). At the core of his theory is the idea of calculation of the end or outcomes in relation to the means, efforts and costs required for reaching such situation or object. Valuation is then considered as a process that allow the recognition of value. For Dewey, there is no valuation without a rationality and calculative operation between means and ends (Dewey, 1939, p45).

That said, Dewey acknowledges the existence of irrational components in valuations that are part of human behaviour associated with personal views, interests and feelings (Dewey, 1939, p57). A goal is usually motivated by desires and needs, and this desired object might be perceived as a value on itself. And, value as a noun in Dewey (1939, p4) is related to specific contexts and practices lead by people who considered the practices or object according to certain criteria. Valuation is subjected to a rationality for calculation between means and ends (1939, p35) and can include "all conduct that is not simply either blindly impulsive or mechanically routine seems to involve valuations" (Dewey, 1939, p3). His theory may be thought of as an approach that considers and explain actors' actions in rational and materialistic terms which pay attention to the environment and the individuals' logic for defining the process of calculation.

By considering Goffman's (1986) latter theory on frames, it is possible to recognise how multiple systems of action may provide different meaning to a situation in which different actors interact and make decisions. His analysis incorporates the living agency of the actors and their capacity to understand frameworks and behavioural keys for the specific enactment of one frame or another (Goffman, 1986, p22). Goffman's interest was not to conceptualise valuation per se, but to understand that human interactions require frames for guiding actions and "depends upon validation awarded and withheld in accordance with the norms of a stratified society" (Branaman, 1997, pxlvi). Frames in Goffman are "schemata of interpretation" or a system

of/for analysis the world (Goffman, 1986, p38) and consciously or unconsciously operates on individuals and on activities by locating them into specific coordinates, norms and logic for action that allow considers situations and performances as appropriate or inappropriate.

In line with Dewey's ideas, Goffman, understands the value of something in relation to a specific situation and the possibility of group to hold and enact norms and validated the result of an activity as a valuable doing or thing. Frames and people are not considered as predetermined and fixed social constructions that can be typified on a theory of social structures. The frame is a form of interpreting a world that is open to different ways of understanding a situation and correct behaviour depending on the possibility of an agreement from common frame for action (Goffman, 1986, p10).

However, actors do not simple choose a frame to act, but need to agree with others on their fitness and right to conduct according to a schema of interpretation. In formal and strictly regulated relationships, the possibility of using one or another frame is usually not open to discussion. They are established by obligations and rights that generates differences in the exercise of power such those of employer and employee, superior and subordinate, judge and suspect. By organising the meaning of actions and situations, frames can also be understood as a way of prescribing how actors need to participate, and they "involve expectations of a normative kind as to how deeply and fully the individual is to be carried into the activity organised by the frames" (Goffman, 1986, p345). Institutions help to create authority rankings and roles – such as president of the party – and procedures for actions such as the democratic system. This type of well-established frame is considered as principle external to actors involved in a dispute and help to align all actors into expected types of behaviour. A frame for a specific circumstance establishes the types of commitments that one actor expects form the other. Employees are expected to be at their job station at certain hours. Left-wing supporters need to attend meetings, respond to the call of help in campaigning and act according to certain values such as solidarity or resilience against oppression. Goffman "considers social structure and social organization primary relative to the framing of experience in everyday social situations" (Branaman, 1997, pxlvii), in the sense that individuals are not free to choose the frame whenever the find more convenient. Even if actors may be capable of manipulation – such as in the case of *fabrications*

(Goffman, 1986, p83) – the use of frame and the appropriateness of claims are also subject to the validation of others included in the interactions.

Goffman did not analyse Facebook, but it possible to observe Facebook as a space where the distinctions between formal and informal and between personal views and organisational views are often blur. On FA's Facebook Page users were expected to be supporters and help the party winning the elections – a topic that is empirically analysed in detail in chapter six – and the party had an official page. But, in line with the analysis of a specific style of direct and familiar communication, messages may be played in a key that suggested informality. In line with the concept of *productive publics* and the description of the culture of FA political supporters, the expectations around public participation on Facebook may be quite low and closer to what Goffman has understood as informal talks. Informal talks were connected with Goffman ideas of gaining personal appreciation for others (Branaman, 1997, plxxvii) and may somehow related to the building of social capital that it is also build online by the capacity of generate responses from a public.

Informal spaces and conversation are not so rigged and ambiguity regarding the frames for interaction is more likely to occur. Similarly, the possibility of considering different frames and falling in recognising what is the right one for acting may also happen more easily. This may trigger an amicable negotiation in which one of the parts is able to convince the other. But the dispute may continue and evolved into what can be considered an open dispute in which the different parts try to define what is happening and what is the right action to take (Tkacz, 2013, p26). Why someone should be censored on an Open Facebook Group that recognises democracy and freedom of speech? And, why is someone allowed to criticise the FA on a Facebook Group that is campaigning for that party?

Goffman (1986, p480) considered that errors and misunderstanding of a frame may occur and suggests a series of forms to correct actions and re-establishing an agreement regarding what is the right course of action. This required an established frame for supporting what is considered as meaningful observations to prove that someone or something is wrong. And the conflict around a valuation of “honesty, efficiency, economy, safety, elegance, tactfulness, good taste, and so forth” (Goffman, 1986, p22) allows to observe

“A serial management of consequentiality is sustained, that is, continuous corrective control, becoming most apparent when action is unexpectedly blocked or deflected and special compensatory effort is required. Motive and intent are involved, and their imputation helps select which of the various social frameworks of understanding is to be applied” (Goffman, 1986, p22).

As a result of a dispute one of the actors may recognise the error and retract them to dissipate tensions, avoiding embracement or a corrective action in which one of actors applies penalties or reduces the position of the other. Similarly, a provisional agreement they may be reach in what Stark (2009, p108) considers a discursive pragmatism in which actors are able to make adjustments and compromise some of their initial position to make room for other views and settling down the tension that otherwise may preventing decisions and the continuity of some of the parties in the project.

However, if the conflict persists, it may lead to a situation in which no possible negotiation or understanding if possible (Tkacz, 2012, p77) and the interactions needs to be suddenly interrupted or coercive actions are taken by one of the actors who holds power to do this. Users insulting others on a Facebook Page Group may be asked to delete the comments by an administrator who may eventually decide to ban them as part of a frame that establishes insults as inappropriate behaviour.

A different situation may be considered if the tension is hold between participants who are respected and recognised by others as a valid member of a project. They different parties may have different sets of resources and arguments to suggest what is the best way of understanding the situation and move forward for achieving a goal. And, they may suggest a higher frame for resolving the tension in which new bases for reaching an agreement between the different parts (Tkacz, 2012, p76). For example, on a discussing about the value of a post that critics politicians outside the FA, some users may say that this is not contributing for campaigning for the FA (Jimena, interview, 2014). But, other users may consider that a critique to the opponent helps to the FA and it is a valid contribution to the campaign (Lenina, interview, 2014). If the two sides are not able to find an agreement, a different frame may be suggested to try finding a common ground on which the form of participation on a Facebook group may be agreed. As part of the resource of the actors, one of them may claim that the freedom of posting any type of content on Facebook is a valid contribution to help creating a democratic and inclusive space for participation. The actor with a specific goal (to keep

the post on the wall of the group) is trying to re-frame the action in accordance to ideas of freedom of speech and democracy that are of common accepted by all the participants. Under this new criterion to value the post, the actors may leave the previous two different arguments aside and find the bases for an agreement based on higher principles and goals shared by the group.

This latter point introduces the relation between value and the need of having rules and argument that are perceived as external to the participants. Boltanski and Thévenot (1999, p361) conceptualised this by referring to the need of a *convention of equivalences* on which the different parts are able to divest themselves from their singularity and converge in a common practice and rules that transcend their immediate interests and individualities. By doing so, the different parts are able to achieve an agreement that temporarily solves the tensions around disputed objects.

According to Boltanski and Thévenot (1999, p362), conventions remain implicitly accepted and given for granted in everyday actions and specific contexts. These conventions are also based on frames that the authors call a *regimen of justification* in relation their interest in understanding how people is able to challenge a situation and defend their actions. They may be applicable to a family group and only followed by them or be part of national regulations such as the code of justice, but their appropriateness depends on the circumstances and context. In line with Goffman, the emphasis for understanding the value of something is not placed on the group, but in the situation and the types of roles being performance. People move from one situation to another and interact with each other in relation to specific objects and activities: “a person must – in order to act in a normal way – be able to shift, during the space of one day or even one hour, between situations which are relevant in relation to different forms of equivalence” (Boltanski and Thévenot 1999, p365).

Boltanski and Thévenot (1999, pp359-60) focused part of their work on the critical moment that arises when mutually incompatible modes of explaining a situation exist. This is considered as part of people ability to be critical and reflexive and to pose questions related to situations with which they may be in disagreement. Then, they may propose a different form of acting that evolves into a dispute about certain objects and practices. Boltanski and Thévenot propose a conceptualisation of frameworks to analyse dispute in different

situations and considering that the possibility of criticising and supporting one actions requires a process of calculation base on a principle of equivalence on which objects and performances can be order and qualify. In this calculation “the reference to a principle of equivalence is also a basic operation necessarily implemented in order to set up a claim, unveil an injustice and ask for an atonement”. (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1999, p363). These provide arguments based on a rationality for calculating a situation as fair or value to the doings of a group of people.

Boltanski and Thévenot (1999, p367, p373) propose an anthropocentric⁵¹ and pragmatic approach that needs to follow the connections between objects and people for the analysis of the regimens of justifications applied by the actors. They “rely on things, objects, devices which are used as stable referents, on which *reality tests* or trials can be based” (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1999, p367). The creation of *reality tests* helps to support and justify actions in relation to certain meanings and logic based on grounded observable indicators. Those objects and devices help to keep agreements and settle down disputes in accordance to what is perceived as a tangible and valid criterion for understanding a situation and acting upon it.

By reviewing Gerlitz and Helmond analysis on the Facebook, the Like Button may be considered as part of the mechanism that allow a convention of equivalence for the interaction of users around contents and pages interested in catching the people’s attention. The social button transforms the individual affective responses “into a mere number on the Like counter and made comparable” (2013, p17-8) different intensities. For those who measure the impact of content for generating responses and support from the public, this indicator may be considered as a *reality test* for judging the campaign and the participation of actors. This thesis also argues that these metrics are considered in relationships and re-evaluations that are external to Facebook and create a series of nuances and issues analysed in the following chapters.

For this thesis that analyses Facebook where conventions are usually loosely established it is especial interesting to considering that multiple forms of value or orders of worth may be at stake simultaneously on that platform that allow diverse types of interactions, but a different problem proposed by these Boltanski

⁵¹ Anthropocentric in the sense that values and valuations need to be understood from inside a situation where actors use certain principles already validated by the intervening actors.

and Thévenot is also relevant. They considered how issue arises when people try to apply different regimens for justifying the action that related to principles of equivalence that are “incompatible with one another, since each of them is recognized in the situation in which its validity is established as universal” (Boltanski and Thévenot 1999, p365). In the case where two different ways of understanding the world are confronted each other, a *radical criticism* (Boltanski and Thévenot 1999, p374) may create a competition in which the reality tests and the criteria of each regimen of justification compete. An agreement in this instance is not possible and one of parts may need to compromise the claimed position and accept the other argument as valid or fracture may happen in the relationship. In this latter case the capacity of some actors, such the administrators on Facebook group, to convince others about the importance of supporting the party in certain form may fail. And the negotiation for reinforcing a *collective identity* around a common goal challenged.

Conclusions

By reviewing the concepts of *productive publics* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p49), *collective identity* (Melucci, 1996), Dewey's (1939) general theory on valuation and Goffman's (1986) theory on frame, the chapter provided the thesis with the key tools to start analysing how participation on Facebook become a valuable experience in the specific context of the 2014 Uruguayan campaign. Similarly, Espeland and Sauder (2007) conceptualisation of the *audit culture* and *reflexivity* helped to chapter to advance the analysis of valuation processes in a specific direction.

In line with the previous description on changing nature of Facebook, this chapter started by reviewing different terms used to conceptualisation this platform. Social Media, Web 2.0, big data and SNS became popular in specific context such the re-launch online business-oriented services – *Web 2.0* – or the possibility of new analytical capacity provided by digitalisation of entire populations – big data. Social media was considered an unspecific and loose term to be avoided in the following chapters. Instead, boyd and Ellison's (2008) definition of SNS was considered to be more appropriate for understanding Facebook. Similarly, the definition of *productive publics* was understood as a relevant term to recognise the loose connections and objectification of users interests and involvement with specific issues that facilitates the creation of value. In

line with this idea, Facebook metrics “in the form of ratings and “social buttons,” (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p60) were understood as potential general equivalent for valuation.

By considering Grosser’s (2014) analysis on Facebook metrics and Espeland and Sauder (2007) cultural analysis on measuring practices, the chapter has already able to start suggesting the idea of the Facebook as a crucial agent in the *popularisation of the audit culture*. The thesis will elaborate this idea in relation to the empirical observations of the following chapters and considered it as main term to understand valuation in *productive publics*. Metrics on Facebook allow large organisations and individuals to apply tailored and personalised valuation processes to their specific interests. In doing so, the control of metrics has been partially switched from professionals to Facebook’s domain, and the loose interactions of *productive public* may be evaluated by any kind of user in relation to their personal objectives and criteria.

However, valuation processes are not only attached to devices in a medium, but they are also related to specific users’ needs and views that are not confined to Facebook. The metrification of public’s participation travels and is modified by a network of actors that may apply different frames for valuation with aims and consequences that are perceived in a wider context beyond online media. To define what is a relevant object is not an automatic process directly created by the platform. This chapter considered the nuances of this process and the importance of noticing that Facebook measuring devices are not universally accepted and need to be presented as problematic objectification that are not always trusted. The lack of transparency in Facebook back-end processes, the multiple types of measuring and interpretations and different circumstances in which one analytical frame may be chosen over other cast doubts around the possibility of a general consensus around the value of those metrics. The conceptualisation of *slacktivism* has mentioned as an example of the issue faced by campaigners trying to evaluate the overall political scenario based on online participation. Explanations of phenomena that goes beyond the platform with Facebook metrics may find severe limitations. Similarly, practices such as click-farms, paid advertisement services or the strategic action of campaign teams to manipulate the counting generate doubts about the actual value of these forms of measurement. The issues will be analysed as part of certain practices developed in the FA campaign in a specific context.

The chapter found a general agreement regarding a paradigm change in the study of the public's involvement (Savage and Burrows 2007; Savage, et al., 2010), which is applicable to the study of political campaigns (Barnard and Kreiss, 2013; Scammell, 2014; Vaccari, 2013). The new forms of conducting political marketing and analysing public involvement was considered by reviewing the Obama's campaign as a witness case in the USA, where large companies have successfully proved a good command of SNSs for conducting political marketing. However, campaigners' attitudes towards SNSs vary significantly from one country to another (Plasser and Plasser, 2002, p83), and the observations about practices in the USA may not be applicable to Uruguay.

Studies on political communication tend to observe the metrics from the practical needs of managerial studies in the context of a developed country (Plasser and Plasser, 2002; Scammell, 2014). A few exceptions include the work of Gerbaudo (2014a; 2016); Gerodimos and Justinussen (2014); and Milan (2015), but they analysed phenomena in developed countries and have not focused on the ethnographic study of the culture of a political party during elections. And they have not analysed the mechanisms whereby one of the multiple different measuring devices and analytical tools could be chosen over the others; and what are the process, and who are involved in making decisions regarding the supremacy of one criterion over the others. This thesis has suggested in the introduction and chapter one that the possibility of entangling these metrics in the production and recognition of value needs to be understood in specific circumstances generated by those who require tools for supporting and making decisions on a political campaign. The value of *social buttons* should not be taken for granted and its recognition as valid units of value has to be considered in relation to the needs and practices of actors such as web-masters and marketing campaigners searching for evidence about web traffic and public engagement. The analysis of how actors sought to negotiate such issues with specific frames of valuation is considered as a literature gap that the thesis addresses.

The review of debates around online populism help to show emergence of a distinctive dynamics of communication brought by SNSs. Facebook facilitates a direct connection between users and politicians and a type of participation that requires low threshold level of commitment through immediate content

production and response with social buttons. In the case of some leaders, SNSs might be used facilitate use a strong and direct language that is in line with a more mundane and informal style of communication that might help create a sense of connection with a group and politicians. This has helped politicians to circumvent filters of professional journalists and gather massive publics around the page of a presidential candidate or national issues. But, Facebook fosters different types of interactions and connections with issues that are re-appropriated at different scales and in line with the individualised interests. The creation of *bubble filters* and *echo chambers* where users only listen to similar political views and ostracise other groups is not a direct effect of Facebook but also related to the user culture and decision (Benkler et al., 2017).

The term *collective identity* was suggested as a conceptual tool to understand online practices of political groups as part of moving and complex processes where multiple actors intervene and negotiate meanings and possibilities of action in specific contexts and fields. The recognition of an identity and values are then problematized as part the constant negotiation around defining membership and group boundaries oriented towards specific goals and circumstances that change across time. For this research, Facebook may be considered as part of these means for the process of constructing the FA's collective identity in the context of an electoral race. This medium adds to the process its own complexity and dynamic where the variety of practices, opinions and *reactivity* (Espeland and Sauder, 2007) may be described as the multiple levels of meaning, tensions and reflexivity that exist in political groups (Melucci, 1995, p53).

The last section of this chapter considered valuation as a continuous process which involves measuring of attributes and calculation which are open to negotiations and reinterpretations that may destabilised the recognised value of something – such as the picture of the FA final campaign act – and elicit further actions. This review help to clarify the difference between value and valuation that will be useful to distinguish the different practices described in chapter four and the analysis of chapters five and six. To summarise definitions in a sentence, value may be defined as result of a process which momentarily settles the attribute of an object in relation to a goal – such as Facebook for a campaign or a specific user contribution. Valuation was fundamentally understood as a calculative exercise based on certain criteria for measuring and

considers the means and specific circumstances for achieving a goal. Valuation and value are actually not separable and part of a same process, but this thesis consider the former a more useful term to observe the interactions of different actors. Because valuation involves explicit rationalities for calculation, it is also subjected to the creation of statements by the different actors who invoke certain principles to enable certain practices and justify them when tensions arise between different views and interests that dispute the same object.

In Dewey the existence of desire is recognised as an initial motivation and starter of action, but his theory of valuation is reduced the process of calculations of ends according to costs and effort spent in the means to achieve the goal. This useful approach seems to prioritise a rational logic for defining valuation which need to be re-thought in relation of what Melucci considers as irreducible and non-negotiable components of the identity. This thesis will need to consider that at some specific point actors may not behave in term of rational calculation, but consider some political topics, contributions and practices as completely unacceptable regardless any possible benefits for reaching a target. Melucci inclusion of feeling and emotions in the *collective identity* will be helpful to explain some of the users' reactions to posts analyse in chapter six.

By introducing Boltanski and Thévenot's analysis on the justification of practices, the chapter finally considered the idea of conflict and issues behind the conceptualisation of valuation. Their definition is in line with Melucci's notion of *collective identity* that requires agreements and negotiations based on commonly shared principles that allows a continuity and unity despite of temporary tensions and discussions. An agreement is related to the resources of actors who relies on objects and devices to provide evidence or *reality tests* considered by the different parties to validate the actions taken.

In line with Dewey and Boltanski and Thévenot, valuations can be thought of as responses to a problem that needs to be solved. What triggers a valuation is the necessity of making a decision regarding an object or situation. This may involve different actors who are interested in the same thing from opposite positions – in example different parties in an electoral race – or a valuation regarding different options and means for achieving a goal – for example deciding if a video or a picture on Facebook is better for catching the attention

of users and how feasible each of them are. The valuation can be thought as process that settle downs controversies and provides a guideline for further action in a meaningful way. By following Boltanski and Thévenot, conflict may be understood as an especial opportunity to observe the enactment of cognitive frames, conventions and general equivalents. Disagreements and the temporary destabilisation of value of an object or position requires the statements of frames and rules for achieving an agreement and settling down the tensions.

By reading on the issues around valuation and the understanding value, it is already possible to observe that valuation processes are not a direct result of Facebook's agency. Instead, valuation may be considered a part of networked practices involving several actors who set objectives and specific frames for assessing online performances. Facebook might be considered as an organiser of public issues and attention around a universal scheme which quantifies the public involvement using standardised metrics. But, the production and recognition of value is also directly linked to how users frame the public participation in relation to specific circumstances and objectives. In Goffman, frames are principles to define interactions into specific norms of rules for actions that are agreed by actors in accordance to existing meanings and views shared by the group. They are needed schema for the interpretation of the world and interaction with others, but actors are fixed to one and multiple frames may be enacted on a same situation to generate different forms of valuation depending on how users understand what is worth it doing – a topic which is observed and developed in detail in chapter four.

By bringing together academic debates from different fields, the review has also been able to identify various approaches that put the emphasis on diverse forms of value. And, in doing so, the thesis already started observing one of the thesis' main topic related to the multiple forms of value that are simultaneously enacted on Facebook by different actors. The idea of ethical capital for branding perspective is one of the forms in which the value of productive publics can be understood for the objectives of professional campaigners. The Like and Share Buttons, were considered as important tools to build a public, increase content reach, and recommendations to undecided voters. But, at a personal level, Grosser (2014) has analysed how the

possibility of receiving positive feedback thereby social buttons is related to self-esteem in a sense of personal prize in networks which can varied from small closed kittened family groups to a large public. Similarly, Facebook was mentioned in relation to its commercial value for making business around information management and revenues from advertisement.

After reviewed existing literature from the field of online media and political communication, the chapter found that the analysis on the emergence of value out of *productive publics* in political campaigns remains mostly unexplored – with a few exceptions (Gerbaudo, 2015; Gerbaudo, 2016; Milan 2015). The choice of Facebook as the platform to study political participation on digital publics is the result of a number considerations aiming at providing a contribution to reviewed debates. The analysis of Facebook in Uruguay contributes to close this gap on academic qualitative approaches to political participation on the most popular SNS. Similarly, the analysis of Facebook in Uruguay fits well one of the main interest of this research related to popularisation of online technologies and metrics in the production of forms of value in political participation. To fill this literature gap and contribute to existing debates, the thesis will conduct an ethnographic and detail analysis on Facebook and value production based on the unexplored case of users' involvement on pages dedicated to the 2014 FA campaign.

Chapter 3 – Methodology. *Designing an ethnographic approach.*

“the concept of collective identity is a permanent warning about the necessity of recognizing a plurality of levels in collective action (...) The complexity, the irreducibility, the intricate semantics of the meanings of social action” (Alberto Melucci, 1995a, page 54).

“Reimmersed in that humbling experience of ethnography where once again they have to appreciate that the world is always so much more than we can envisage. It is ethnography that keeps us open to the world and provides the insights we return to the world” (Daniel Miller, 2017, page 30).

Introduction

From diverse approaches, SNSs and their communicational affordances have been seen as fruitful spaces to develop empirical studies and methodologies (boyd and Crawford, 2011; Savage and Burrows, 2007). They have been considered as novel means to conduct online participant-observation (İstanbulluoğlu, 2014, p112; Kozinets, 2010, p60) with researchers involved and interacting with online users. Similarly, the possibilities of recording connections and actions have been used to develop innovative digital methods to obtain data about the politics of digital media and the actors' interactions (Marres and Gerlitz, 2014; Rogers, 2009; 2013b). A more classical type of ethnographic study was conducted by Miller and Slater (2000); Miller (2011) and Miller et al. (2016) in their studies of the materialities of culture on SNS practices. This latter approach put special emphasis on understanding the specific environment and culture in which people act as part of multimedia digital societies.

In agreement with that latter approach, this chapter explains the reasons for selecting an ethnography centred on the users' experience as the best possible exploratory design to response to the questions on how and why users' participation on Facebook was valuable in the specific context of the FA's 2014 electoral campaign. And, in line with Boltanski and Thévenot's definition of conflicts as an analytical opportunity⁵², this approach allows the research to conduct an analysis that required insight and deep knowledge on how

⁵² To review their approach see the third section of chapter 2.

various intertwined actors simultaneously performed diverse forms of valuations on Facebook. This approach provides the opportunity to observe the contradictions and confrontations in the users' interactions that exposed valuations constructed by actors in a process of mutual consensus and negotiations. Similarly, an ethnography was in accordance with the importance of gaining insight knowledge on the frames that provided meaning to actions of involved actors (Goffman, 1986).

After this introduction, the chapter is divided into four main sections that define the reasons to choose that approach and its implications. The first section starts by providing a general conceptualisation of the object of study in relation to the research questions. This allows the introduction of an ethnography and participatory-observation approach as the best methodology to answer the research questions. Here, the use of semi-structured interviews and content analysis and some components of collaborative research are considered as necessary means to observe to the valuations carried out by FA's members. Finally, the last part of this first section describes the application of those methods and the overall outcomes. In the second section, the results of the fieldwork and available data are described in detail and methodological recommendations of the aforementioned second approach or netnography are considering as a guideline. And, a detailed description of the requirements and steps followed to collect data are provided. In line with those recommendations, the third section considers the ethical implications of conducting participant observation with a political party during elections and taking data from Facebook. The steps to avoiding a negative impact on the research participants are explained, and a clear ethical position regarding the collaboration with a political party and knowledge production is stated. The asymmetry between researcher and research participants is also considered in relation to the possibility of contributing to the process of creating knowledge undertaken by the participants. The last section reflects and rethinks in the scope, limitations and advantages of the methodology applied and the data collected for analysing valuation processes on Facebook.

Section 1 – Designing a strategy and defining the object of study: *An ethnographic approach to follow valuation practices:*

The selection of Facebook as a platform to study *productive publics* and political participation was related to three main points considered in the previous chapters. The first point is connected to a gap in the literature and the relative lack of qualitative research on political participation and online cultural conducted on this platform (Gerbaudo, 2012; 2016). Most of the research on political participation has been conducted on Twitter⁵³ (Tufekci, 2014) and uses a quantitative approach. The second point recognises the indisputable popularity of Facebook in Uruguay⁵⁴. An aspect that is in line with the research interest of analysing the popularisation of online metrics and the auditing performances around shared topics and productive publics. The last aspect was related to that massive usage and the wealth of the material for observing tensions and open discussion on this platform. As result of that popularity and the various users and forms of participations, Facebook provided the research with a space to observe the complexity of the multiple interests and point of view involved in *productive publics* around political participation. It was for these reasons that Facebook was taken to be a central actor of a complex object of study that can be defined as the valuation processes of users' participation on the 2014 FA's political campaign.

The types of associations described in *productive publics* and the openness of Facebook to all kind of users and interactions has been already linked to the idea of multiple forms of value simultaneously enacted by different actors. Users on Facebook re-appropriated and re-signified interactions and online metrics – a crucial and omnipresent device on Facebook – in relation to their own interests. The coexistence of multiple points of views on the value of Facebook has been considered as an important element to understand the participation of *productive publics*. And a fundamental principle for selecting a methodology was the

⁵³ The original proposal for this thesis considered the possibility of conducting research on participation on Twitter and Facebook. This idea was based on the researcher's previous knowledge about the common use of Twitters by politicians all around the world and South American countries such as Argentina. In February 2014 the researcher started collecting data for a couple of Facebook pages and Twitter accounts on sporadic basis with the idea of choosing some pages that could be follow up as part of the case of study.

⁵⁴ See the second section of the first chapter.

possibility of observing these multiple forms of valuation simultaneously enacted on a Facebook page. Valuation practices were not defined in advance by pre-existing rules, but understood as part of intertwined of multiple agencies, which this thesis explores in the following chapters. Similarly, the emergence of value out of the *productive publics* was considered as a process that is beyond the distinction of offline and online spaces and part of interests and needs of actors who move in different media and circumstances.

In line with the theories on valuation reviewed in the last chapter and with Miller and Slater's (2000) ethnography on internet, the specific context and culture are crucial to understand how value can be created on Facebook. As a result, this thesis considers necessary to establish a time frame for the analysis between the FA internal presidential candidacy in the last months of 2013 and the presidential ballotage at the end of November 2014. The ethnography approach allowed the researcher to submerge in the particular scenario of an electoral campaign to analyse the meanings provided by actors (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994; Vidali and Peterson, 2012, p264) who intervened on pages dedicated to the FA.

Following Atkinson and Hammersley (1994, p248-9), it is possible to define ethnography and participant observation as a form of conducting research in which the scholar needs to be immersed and participate in the world of a group studied and use his or her personal perceptions for sensing and interpreting the meanings created by the actors involved in production the phenomena. As a result, the possibility of obtaining relevant data relies on the researcher's capacity to understand specific language, and codes associated with those practices.

By considering the interpretative requirements of such approach, it is important to mention the researcher's cultural proximity to the group was instrumental for analysing valuation processes on the 2014 FA campaign. Similarly, participant observation was also facilitated by the researcher's friendship with a supporter of the FA who worked as a gatekeeper.

The thesis aimed to capture the heterogeneity in the processes of valuations on users' participation around the FA' campaign. It was important to include the party official Facebook, but also groups and pages, which were created by supporters outside the party structure. The project also considered important to look at

pages of different parties inside the FA and their legislative candidates. In line with the recognition of internal differences mentioned in chapter one, their various Facebook pages were initially considered as diverse types of *productive publics* who may have been views associated to diverse forms of valuating participation. And, the observation of different pages was associated with the research aim of exploring a dynamic of value production on Facebook associated to its capacity of enacting multiple orders of worth for the various actors who participate on this platform.

In order to follow actors and the valuations on *productive publics*, 20 Facebook Fan Pages and 10 Open Groups were selected⁵⁵. The most basic requisite for choosing these Pages and Groups was their connections with the 2014 Uruguayan elections. Screenshots of 30 sites were regularly taken, but the content analysis focused on the interactions around the official FA's Fan Page⁵⁶, the Constanza Moreira's Fan Page⁵⁷ and the Open Groups called "Frente Amplio, Uruguay"⁵⁸, and Frente Amplio Closer to the People⁵⁹. Thirteen of those 30 pages championed the political interests of other parties competing with the FA and/or were against its electoral aims of that party. They provided valuable information to the collaborative component of this research (explained in the following subsection) and consider competition as a basic notion of an electoral race (Scammell, 2014) continually considered by the research participants. But, these 13 pages were considered as auxiliary to the main object of this research focused on the participation on pages fostering the FA's political goals. For ethical and fundamental reasons elaborated in the next sections, the data collection on these thirteen sites was limited and did not include the same possibilities for the in-depth analysis conducted on FA's pages. The selection of the other seventeen of those pages associated to the FA responded to the research interest in capturing of heterogeneity in Facebook's FA pages.

The process of gaining membership to FA's groups was the result of a specific strategy which emerged as a result of the fieldwork exploration and mutual understanding between the researcher and the research

⁵⁵ The list of the pages and groups with their names and their URL can be found in the first appendix.

⁵⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/FrenteAmplioOficial>.

⁵⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/ConstanzaMoreira2014>.

⁵⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096>.

⁵⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/674152342677806>.

participants. The data collected from those observed pages was instrumental to propose and develop reports that were useful for the FA and provided material that allowed a participant-observation with different party members and supporters. The researcher always identified himself as a researcher who was willing to collaborate with the FA campaign, but was conducting developing a final piece of research that is absolutely independent of the party and its political interests. In the context of an electoral race and with the aim of gaining insight observation, it was necessary to establish a trustful and exclusive collaborative relationship that was conducted by previous consent and it had consider possible ethical implications analysed in the third section of this chapter.

Participant observations mostly took place at the FA's headquarters where the National Commission for Communication and Propaganda (National Commission) was based. The large property was located in the centre of Montevideo and less than 150 meters from the City Hall. It was at a walking distance from the houses of other parties inside the FA and a campaign hub where many actors met, discussed electoral strategies and distributed materials and resources. In this building, the National Commission team had meetings with agents from advertising companies, political consultants, party authorities and staff, supporters, and campaigners from the different parties such as the MPP (Movimiento de Participación Popular) or the PS (Partido Socialista).

The researcher's involvement with these groups started after an initial interview with the National Commission's chief and the team's online manager. The researcher found out that the team were constantly observing the indicators provided by Facebook (numbers of Likes, Shares and Comments) on their own official page. The team made verbal comments on specific post such as "the image of Pepe always has a good response from the people" (Paula, interview, 2014); or "large political comments do not have much responses from the people (Daniel, interview, 2014). But, they seconded Manuel's opinion described in the introduction's epigraph⁶⁰ (page 1) about the limited development of analytical tools to understand and plan Facebook political campaigns in Uruguay. Some parties such as the PS had commissioned reports to analyse Facebook to external consultants, but the National Commission of Communication did not have a

⁶⁰ See the first page of this thesis.

systematic method to conduct such analysis. The advertising agency working for them had not been able to provide those tools despite of their promises of doing so. As a result, the researcher suggested to the team the possibility to collaborate with them in the analysis of the campaign on Facebook as part of a mutually beneficial learning experience.

The successful proposal to work with the FA team in weekly reports allowed the research to observe the activities of the National Commission in their offices during the campaign and participate in diverse types of meeting and daily interactions. By using data publicly displayed on Facebook and internal metrics provided by the Fan Page Insight Page⁶¹ the campaign team and the researcher agreed that it would be possible to make data visualisations⁶² and have weekly meetings to discuss what would be important to include in reports. These reports did not include a written analysis of the visualisations and the idea was to discuss the metrics during the meetings. By doing so, the researcher anticipated, the discussions around Facebook indicators and their importance for the campaign team would be enacted as part of a participant observation approach that included some elements of action research.

These reports varied considerable from the first one to the last one and included different types of data and pages. Access to the password protected data from the official FA's Insight Page was provided at the end of September as part of a need to analyse the weekly most successful posts and allowed the creation of a final report that included the following data visualisations

- 1) The overall progression of Facebook's Likes reached by the official FA page since the first week of August 2014
- 2) The weekly percentage changes in the numbers of new Likes reached by the same page
- 3) The maximum number of Facebook accounts reached by a single post in the last 10 weeks (this indicator is not publicly available and was taken from the official FA Insight Page)
- 4) The type of users reached by the most seen post (page's fan or a non-fan)
- 5) A comparative chart with the number of Likes, Comments and Shares of the most seen post on the Pages of different parties

⁶¹ To see a brief description of the Insight Page see the chapter 1 section 2.2.4.

⁶² Some of these visualisations can be seen in the second appendix at the end of the thesis.

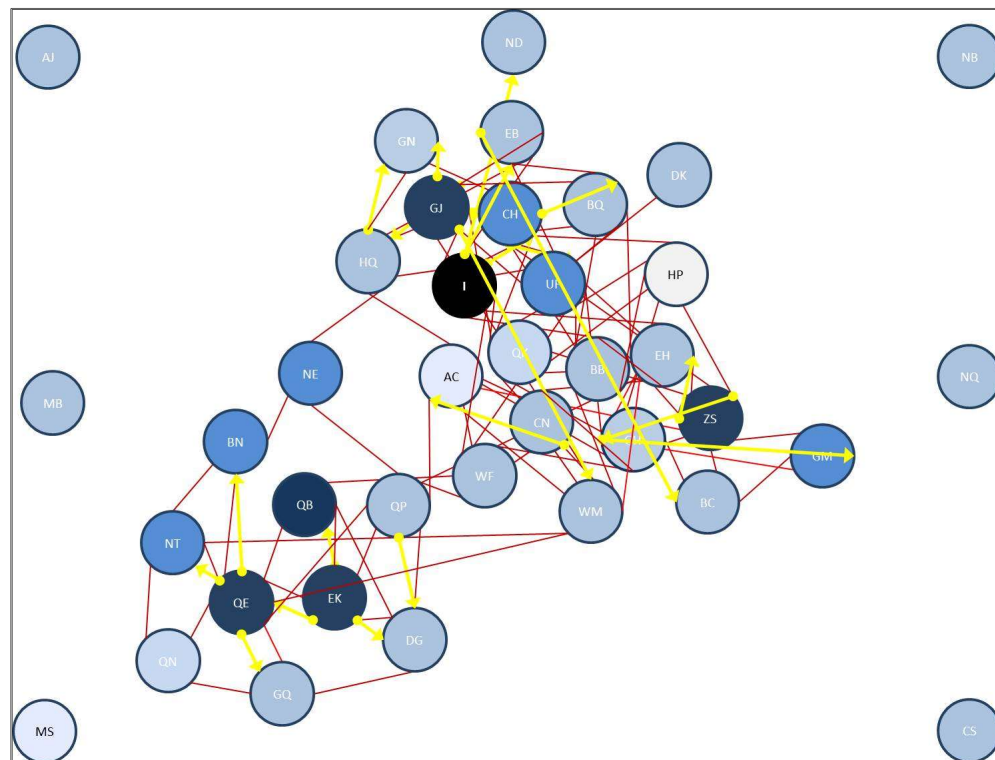
- 6) A description of the publications with the most numbers of Likes on the pages of the three main opposition parties that included: keywords, the use of images, the number of reached Likes, shares and comments, the mention of other accounts
- 7) The number of Facebook accounts mentioned on those publications
- 8) A table comparing the topics and numbers reached by the weekly most liked post in the different parties

The National Commission team conducted one of the many possible forms of valuating political participation, and for this research, direct observations and collaboration with the official campaign team was very important, but, other teams and forms of campaigning were also followed by the researcher. These other groups gathered around the creation of Moreira new party called Casa Grande and the Facebook Groups 'Frente Amplio, Uruguay' or 'For a FA Closer to the People' to use the platform in different ways and made valuation in relation to other interests and forms of framing participation on Facebook.

Finally, this research aimed to analyse the actors' discursive performances involved in creation of valuations on the public participation enacted by different Facebook users. The analysis of those discourses to justify and enact practices become available thereby the content posted on Facebook pages and the interviews with journalists, politicians, political marketing consultants and FA's supporters. They were all familiar with the use of Facebook for political campaigning and most recognised themselves as FA's supporter, but not all of them. They also occupied various positions and engaged differently on the several pages that belong to the broad spectrum of political groups inside the FA.

Figure 6 below shows the presence of three groups among the 37 interviewees who were connected on Facebook. This is a manually constructed network of users created on Power Point that was originally thought to map users in relation to each other and their participation on different Facebook pages. This first version showed that research participants were members/ fans of many of the studied Facebook pages, but it was a confusing visualisation, and it was discarded. The image below is clearer and shows connections on Facebook (or Facebook friends) in red and the direction of the recommendations for applying a snowball technique in yellow. Darker nodes show a higher number of interactions between the researcher and research participant.

Figure 6: Network visualisation of interviewees based on Facebook connections (in red) and the direction of the snowball recommendations (in yellow). Darker colour shows a higher number of interactions with the researcher.



This visualisation provides an early and general indicator of the inclusion of three different groups of connected people and the proximity of actors who were also linked through Facebook Fan Pages and Groups. In line with Hogan's (2010) observations of the correspondence between offline and online connections, some of these Facebook users also had previous face to face interactions. But, the FA is a massive national party with several different groups and it is not surprising that several research participants did not have any connection with each other. Similarly, the nodes located in the edges of the visualisation were journalists and political consultants who did not recognise themselves as FA's supporters.

The first of those three groups of clustered users may be partially defined as professional campaigners with specific interests and objectives in the Official FA Fan Page. The second group may be recognised as FA independent supporter who at some point gathered around the left-wing and progressive views hold on Constanza Moreira's Fan Page. The last group focused their online activities on "Frente Amplio, Uruguay" and "Frente Amplio Closer to the People". These two Open Groups included a wide range of different supporters who identified themselves with the FA as a broad and sometimes amorphous front that gathered

various users. These Open Groups were partially characterised by users' different affiliations to various party or the lack of a clear affiliation to any those parties inside de FA. Many of these users established loose connections around a political identity that on Facebook did not require high threshold levels for participation. Most participants were connected with others on Facebook, but only a few people had connections in all three groups of research participants.

The points of view and interests of the 37 participants cannot be defined in relation to those three groups or with certain Facebook pages. They were participating on several pages in parallel and their reasons to visit and be involved in a Fan Page or Facebook Group varied significantly and changed over time. Similarly, to be connect on Facebook did not imply a homogeneity in the views of the research participants. Among these participants, the only certain common point was their interest in FA, but they have different backgrounds and belong to different groups with various interests. For example, influential journalists and campaigners such as Valenti were connected with other participants who sometimes strongly criticised his opinions posted on Facebook.

Section 2 – The specificities of data collection and its results.

The possibility of following Facebook pages with an internet connection allowed the researcher to start looking to those *productive publics* from the UK in February 2014. However, the possibility of an ethnographic immersion in the activities of FA's member was conducted in the city of Montevideo in between 28 August and 15 December 2014. A couple of more interviews and information about the party were collected during short visits in December 2015 and May 2017.

The researcher faced a complex and changing and sometimes ephemeral object of study that needed to be followed in different spaces to meet the users' practices around the platform in the context of the campaign.

For example, the non-official Fan Page dedicated to the FA presidential candidate, Tabaré 2014⁶³ was banned the last week of November 2014, in what Vaccari (2010, p321) and Gibson and Ward (2012, p64) would have described as the fears of losing control of the campaign hold by teams aiming at having centralised strategies based on official channels for communication. Pages could be disabled if Facebook's officers considered that users were infringing the users' terms and conditions on their sites. Even if a page was supporting the party and its presidential candidate, it was competing in the distribution of information and using the identity of a presidential candidate who did not have a Facebook page (Daniel, interview, 2014). The page was considered a problem and reported as a fake page misusing the party and the candidate identity.

Screenshots (or images captured directly from the laptop's screen) were complemented with fieldwork notes to record elusive and sometimes ephemeral interactions on Facebook's graphic interphase that could be removed or became difficult to trace. In line with the method used by Grow and Ward (2013), Kozinets (2010), İstanbulluoğlu (2014) and Xenos and Foot (2008), screenshots were shown to the research participants to elicit responses and inform the analysis of content on Facebook pages. Similarly, they were also considered as important components of the analysis of forms of participation which has become increasingly visual (Miller et al., 2016; Miller and Sinanan, 2017, p1). In line with Miller and Sinanan's, (2017) recommendations, this thesis considered it important to show how content was displayed on the Facebook's graphical interface. As a result, the analysis of content will include screenshots, and the translations provided by the researcher are intended to emulate the original layout of these posts. The possibility of capturing the graphic interface is crucial to understand how people interact on a platform which assigns different spaces for participation and shows or hides content depending on where and when user posted content. Similarly, the possibility of capturing pictures and emoticons required images that were analysed in combination with the direct observation of users' practices and responses obtained during the interviews.

⁶³ This page used to be located on this URL <https://www.facebook.com/Tabare2014>, which is not available any more. To consider the reasons behind this decision see page 45 in the first chapter and the analysis on competition around *productive publics* in chapter 4.

To carry a mobile phone and a laptop was crucial for contacting research participants, taking visual records and reminders, recording interviews, browsing Facebook pages and sharing content in diverse spaces such as cafés, offices and improvise campaign workplace. A black Toshiba TECRA R940-1GQ running Windows 7 with a screen of 14.0" and Internet connection were the means for facilitating the research and study of interactions on Facebook.

To start selecting pages, the researcher originally used the Facebook search engine and followed Kozinets (2010) recommendations to consider the number users on the pages. A higher number of users could be linked to more interactivity and a qualitative difference in the dynamics of participation. As a result, the research observed Facebook's metrics to gather pages with a wide range of numbers of users that was considered as an indicator of a potential different dynamics of participation. The largest Groups and Fan Pages were selected together with pages with few users. A final criterion for the selection was somehow suggested by the research participants in their dialogue with the researcher and their descriptions of certain pages as meaningful site for interacting.

Most of the pages supporting other parties were included after talking with the National Commission team and producing the first weekly reports in September 2014. Data collection systematically conducted on weekly basis was carried out until the last day of the election on 30 November 2014. This operation involved entering data into an Excel spreadsheet already recorded and saved in PDF printed directly from Facebook. By having these numbers recorded into a database, the research participants were able to visualise Facebook public indicators over periods of time that were longer than those normally offered by Facebook (two weeks) and establish a discussion around its value for the campaign.

The production of the reports⁶⁴ positioned the researcher as a useful member of the community with access to campaign meetings and the possibility of making suggestions and ask questions related to the form of measuring political participation on Facebook. The process of negotiating which metrics and contents that

⁶⁴ An example of report presented on a weekly basis can be seen in the second appendix at end of this thesis.

needed to be included was discussed on those meetings and collected through handwriting notes taken and personal conversations.

Another important tool during in this ethnographic approach was the use of research diary. This facilitated a reflective practice that was crucial to think about the relationship between the researcher and the other actors involved in the study. The researcher perceived a good reception from the participants and, in line with a generalised South American idea about the English education and culture, he also noticed their interest and positive attitude to talk to someone who introduced himself as a researcher from a University in the UK and was analysing political participation on Facebook. In addition, the culture proximity between a researcher born in Buenos Aires and people who live in Montevideo help to generate a cordial interaction and for conducting the study. But, this proximity was also a potential issue for the misinterpretation of cultural differences of a people who usually describe themselves as more conservative, relaxed and humble than their neighbours in the Argentine capital. The diary also helped to analyse the practices carried out by them and what other types of questions or actions could help to confirm or re-think about regular attitudes and practices.

Finally, semi-structured interviews were also necessary means to interpret the meanings of actors' actions and interests for the valuation of *productive publics*. They provided the possibility of a fluid and flexible conversation with was a rich source of information. Rather than having a fixed guide of questions, the researcher aimed at establishing a conversation where the interactions and tensions around the use of social buttons and online indicators could be discussed. This flexibility around the possibility of listening to the interviewee's narrative and simultaneously steering the conversation towards relevant topics was crucial for interpreting their views (Kvale, 1996; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) and exploring different issues around the value of the public's participation on Facebook.

By transcribing the interviews and recording Facebook posts, the research systematised an analysis that did not use any specific form of rigid coding but documented the different opinions and practices of the actors intervening on the studied Facebook pages. This information was scanned to discover what forms of value and frames for action enacted by these actors.

The importance given to self-presentation and micro campaigning and micro-competition among individual users were not considered as relevant topics for the research before the fieldwork. This only emerged after interviewing participants and looking at how they were managing and interacting with others from their Facebook Personal Pages. Similarly, the importance of owning and personalising a Facebook page strongly resonated in responses provided by interviewees about the value of those sites for interacting with others.

Research participants were mostly recruited using a purposive sample and snowball technique in which the researcher asked interviewees about the contact details of others who could provide relevant information to the project. They included women and men with ages between late 20s and late 60s. They have different socio-economic backgrounds and political experiences. The first interview started with a previously known gatekeeper (included in black and indicated with a letter "I" in the visualisation below) who put the researcher in contact with some members of the FA community. Several interviewees provided contact details, but this was not always a successful manner of getting access to new interviews. The researcher also recognised people who could provide a different account of same pages discussed during the interviews. This thesis did not aim to achieve sample saturation, or obtain a complete picture of the studied phenomenon, but aimed at providing a comprehensive analysis by accessing diverse views on the same Facebook pages with a purposive sampling (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; 1988).

The most significant contribution of this thesis to the academic debates on *SNS* and valuation may be found in the opportunity of observing the issues and discussion that allowed a deconstruction and analysis of the practices on Facebook. By looking into diverse type of groups, pages and users, this approach allowed the researcher to follow practices and found issues that might not been discovered and understood with the same depth by using other types of methodologies.

Some of the participants were approached after finding their contact details online. A task that proved to be time-consuming and sometimes unfertile. Participants were also approached by using the Facebook's directed messaging service with a short research introduction and request for an interview. The response was surprisingly positive and showed that Facebook does not work only as a space for interacting with pre-existing known people (Hogan, 2010), but it can also be a space for networking. However, to send a

message to a non-Facebook-Friend implies that the recipient is not notified about the incoming message, which it goes to a silent others folder in the messaging tab of Facebook. As it was previously observed by İstanbulluoğlu (2014), this project also noticed that in 2014 Facebook limited interactions among non-friends was a problem for contacting and recruiting more interviewees⁶⁵.

Before each interview, the researcher sent a project information sheet to the potential interviewee by email⁶⁶ and personally asked the interviewee about any questions that he or she could have regarding the scope and nature of the research. Interviewees were also notified about the final academic aim of the research and asked for their consent to use the material collected during interviews and interactions with the researcher. Questions around the value of political participation on specific Facebook pages also were prepare in advance. And a file with information about the interviewee previous political affiliation, connections with other Facebook users, online presence in other online media such as Twitter, current and previous occupation was also created as part of relevant information to be considered in the background. Screenshots with interactions on Facebook were also taken as material to elicit responses. Facebook was also accessed during some interviews and pages followed by the interviewee to provide specific example and to elicit a dialogue around the value of certain posts and pages.

The researcher introduced himself and the beginning of the interview and was able maintain a cordial conversation in all cases. The interviewees varied considerable in length and location and were conducted in a one to one and face to face situations, but one, which it was via a Skype call phone. All of them, but one, were digitally recorded with the Nokia 630 mobile phone and originally analysed in relation to what participants considered valuable experiences on Facebook. However, three interviewees preferred to make specific comments off the record and the recorder was stopped for a few minutes in those three meetings. Similarly, all them, but one, lasted at least one hour with the possibility of establishing a desirable good rapport and open dialogue in almost all cases (Kvale, 1996, p125-6). The longest interview lasted 3 hours

⁶⁵ This capacity also depended on privacy settings and was reviewed after 2014 with the changes in the Messenger App for mobiles phones.

⁶⁶ The used information sheet, research participant consent form and audio recording consent form can be found in the first appendix at the end of the thesis.

and 55 minutes and was conducted in the interviewee's living room where the interviewer and the interviewee shared a 'mate drink'⁶⁷.

An interview was conducted with two interviewees who participated in the dialogue with the researcher. This situation was not planned, but it was the result of a specific circumstance in which the researcher considered that it was the only chance for conducting this interview. The presence of a third person was not perceived as disruptive and all participants seemed to be free to talk and express their opinions.

The only interview shorter than one hour lasted 37 minutes, and in this particular case, the researcher noticed that not enough trust and rapport was built. The interviewee was in a rush to go to a work meeting and some of the gesture and emphatic responds puzzled the interviewee regarding the validity of the information provided. Said that, it is important to mention that the information provided in this interview was very useful and showed a completely different approach and understanding about the use of Facebook for political campaigning.

The researcher was only able to access the opinion of party officers after several weeks of working together, but it is important to consider that narratives provided on public pages and interviews are subject to limitation, biases and filters. Roulston (2010, p203) considers that "at best, interviewees will only give what they are prepared to reveal about their subjective perceptions of events and opinions". An interviewee may have also forgotten or not be able to recognise some aspects of his or her practices. And this may have happened during an interview with a senior member of the FA involved in deciding the presidential campaign strategy.

Similarly, as part of the close involvement with the FA, the researcher had access to reports externally commissioned by one of the campaign teams to measure the users' engagement with different Facebook pages. The existence of this report was emphatically denied by the senior campaign advisor. However, the

⁶⁷ Mate is the name of the most traditional and popular Uruguayan caffeinated beverage produced out of the leaves of the yerba mate plant. The dried leaves are traditionally served in a calabash gourd where hot water is poured to create an instantaneous infusion. The beverage is usually drunk from a single calabash gourd or cup and straw with a filter, which restrains the leaves from going into the mouth. Water is served from a kettle or most commonly from a thermos every time someone is given the calabash gourd also called mate.

multiple hierarchies in the FA structure might have contribute to the interview lack of knowledge on those reports systematically created to measure Facebook. If that was a possibility, he might have also decided to hide the existence of this monitoring practices to avoid any kind of rumour about the use of Facebook data.

Section 3 – Ethical considerations of participant-observation in a political campaign on Facebook.

The interactions between researcher and research participants in an ethnographic study influence the activities of the studied group and required an examination of their impact (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994, p253) to conduct ethical practices that avoid unnecessary problems for the participants. For this research, two main aspects needed to be especially considered to avoid unethical practices. The first was related to the use of information that was not originally intended to be part of an academic research. Users on Facebook knew that their comments were observed by other people, but they participated on pages without considering that their comments could become the material for a research. The second point is related to the collaboration with a party during an electoral campaign. This implied the existence of specific and confronting interests that may have benefit one group over the others and the importance of separating the goals of the researcher from the party's interests.

With the regard to the observations taken from Facebook, it is relevant to mention that the information collected from Facebook pages was open and available to everyone, and it may have been considered as hold in the public domain (İstanbulluoğlu, 2014). And this thesis argues that its methods actually does not necessary differ from the principles hold by other types of research that collect and analyse data from all kinds of activities that are in the public domain and external to the researcher's aims. As a result, the quotation of Facebook post and information from those Facebook pages was already publicly available and involved no deception. Similarly, research participant voluntarily agreed and signed a consents form that clearly explained the research collaborative component with the FA until the 1 December 2014, when the

elections were finished. They know that content post on Facebook was under public scrutiny and that their comments made on those interviews could be used for the research.

In line with the collaborative component of the fieldwork, the thesis did not claim to have a neutral position or objective relationship with participants. Instead, it aimed to contribute with the studied group by establishing a mutually beneficial relationship. On the one hand, this study suggested that a direct involvement with the group may help to develop a motivation to generate relevant outputs that considered the interest of all the actors involved in the research (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994). And, on the other hand, it also considered ethically correct to provide a direct contribution to those who gave up time for the production of this study.

In the short term, the study contributed with some of participants by producing reports for the campaign and it also aims to provide them with academic material that might help them to reflect on their own practices and learn from their own experiences. However, the thesis in English might be an interesting reading for fraction of the research participants only. That said, the research aimed at making an exchange of knowledge between the researcher and the participants, and this chapter considers that the reports and interviews were to some extent useful for the participants. Not only did the researcher gather information, but he also engaged with the participants in discussions that fostered their own reflective capacity to act and consciously modify their own practices.

The study also tried to avoid any potential menaces for the participants and took necessary precautions to work with adults over 21 years old who were not in a vulnerable situation and voluntary agreed to participate. Similarly, the researcher did not detect any potential negative consequences as a result of their involvement in this study. However, the research considered necessary to handle the information provided on interviews with special care and confidentiality. Contact details and names or direct reference to places or actions that could identify them were replaced with pseudonyms. In line with the Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, any direct quotations directly associated to real names, would require specific written consent from the researcher participant (Kozinets, 2010, p140).

However, Kozinets (2010) and İstanbulluoğlu (2014) have brought into consideration an important issue related to the possibility of recognising research participants by using search engines to trace back quoted posts published on Facebook. Most people usually use their real names and pictures on their Facebook Personal Pages (Miller, 2011; Hogan, 2010), and there is a slight chance that the use of pseudonyms in quoted text form Facebook might not be enough to keep someone identifying hidden.

This research tested the possibility to trace back posts and comments by using Facebook, Yahoo and Google search engines. With those tools⁶⁸, the results only provided the accurate matches on a very few occasions, and in any case the possibility of finding the person who posted these quotations only arises if the text was entered as main post rather than as a comment on a previous post. Similarly, these posts are now more than three years old and increasingly difficult to track on Platform that prevents users to access old posts and prioritised the content with which users are currently interacting. The project considers that the possibility of tracing back quotations on search engines is mostly an unfruitful task and believes that the benefits of quotation exceed any potential risks. The posts analysed were all in public pages and users were aware of their public character. Similarly, the most controversial posts were all banned from Facebook, and it is only possible to trace them back with a pre-existing archive. In addition, there are no reasons to think that a potential identification of a user would create any direct harmful situation for her or him.

Conclusions: *Reflecting on the scope, limitations and benefits of the ethnographic results.*

This final section of the chapter recognises the scope of the thesis in relation to the limitations and advantages of the selected methodology. The thesis did not pretend to provide a final or universal recipe to understand the value of political participation on Facebook and collected information and cases that served well the research objectives but identified limitations in the possibility of extending the observation to other contexts and situations. In line with Norris (2001) and Davis (2010), it is recognised that those who

⁶⁸ Other type of search involving programming skills or unrestricted access to Facebook databases might provide different results. But, these are not commonly available resources and this study does not consider this possibility as a threat of any kind to the research participants.

participate on websites dedicated to political parties usually have political interests which cannot be reduced to online spaces or single scenarios but are part of their rich life experiences. The studied group are not representative of whole Uruguayan population or what could be imagined to be regular Facebook users. And, this chapter needs to acknowledge that the possibility of extending the research findings to other groups or countries would require collecting further evidence and generate a new set of interactions with the research participants in their specific environments.

Having said this, the chapter described a methodology for understanding valuations as a culture specific phenomenon that may be useful to understand how Facebook contributes to the creation of value for a political group in the contexts of national elections. To gain insight on how *productive publics* became valuable for political groups, this research proposes an ethnographic approach that considers valuations as flexible objects that required a methodology able to follow actors in multiple spaces and interactions that could have not be captured by collecting data from Facebook's only. Participant-observation, semi-structured interviews and content analysis were combined with the cultural immersion that allowed the researcher to circulate around online and offline interactions and observed the often contradictory process of valuations in collective actions (Melucci, 1995a, p60). Similarly, the creation of reports helped to gain membership to the political groups and an account of the activities that was meaningful for the participants. The collaboration with the National Commission and other groups outside the central team was instrumental for obtaining interviews with different actors and observe directly how they considered and ignored certain form of participation and metrics.

The use of a snowball technique and the possibility of contacting diverse users who were on the same Facebook pages allowed the researcher to build a network of interviewees who provided different perspectives on the same sites. Similarly, the opportunity of observing the actors interacting on Facebook and asking them question about their practices allowed the research to gain depth knowledge on the several reasons, motivations to enact different valuations on the public participation on the 2014 FA campaign.

The inter-personal interaction between the researcher and the participants was a crucial aspect for conducting this methodological approach. And, the researcher's collaboration with the party was crucial to

gain the trust of campaign staff and access to information that otherwise could have not been very difficult obtained for an external person. Some of the conversations and responses obtained in the latter months of fieldwork were significantly different to the information capture in the first meetings with the participants. Topics such as the amount of money spent on the campaign, fears, doubts and concerns about the use of Facebook for campaigning only became observable after following the actors for several months with an ethnographic approach.

Chapter 4 – Multiple forms of value in a political campaign

Epigraph

As a former Communist Party member and independent left-wing activist, Ciudadana mentions her disappointment with the political course taken by the FA and considered the renovation of the FA's top leadership as urgent political goal of the "real Uruguayan Left" (Ciudadana, interview, 2014). She actively volunteered for Constanza Moreira in the 2013 FA's internal election of the presidential candidate. And, she found on Facebook a space to promote this alternative project, gain information about other parties and try to catch the attention of other Frenteamplistas to convince them of supporting Moreira.

To access and gain the attention of the public, Ciudadana followed and posted content on several Facebook pages from different groups inside the FA. She posted material that was intellectually stimulating and reflected her journalistic writing skills and several years of political analysis and activism. However, her critiques were sometimes understood as an attempt to make a political division inside the FA and generated a reaction against her alternative proposal. These types of critical interventions were considered beneficial by Facebook managers, such Federico (interview, 2014), because they generated reactions from the party's supporters and fostered more participation that re-activated the users' commitment and activity on the Fan Page. Ciudadana needed Facebook to access a public, but in her participation on those pages, she could not avoid contributing to the goals of page managers competing with her project. Anytime she accessed those pages, the metrics registered a new visit and more users' engagement that those managers used to show party leaders the impact of their Facebook campaigns. Multiple logics and interests were operating on those pages and users' participations could be contributing or competing in different ways.

Introduction

This chapter mostly has an exploratory character and covers diverse types of practices observed in the FA's campaign on Facebook to show how *multivalence* on this platform was related to the different goals and

motivation of various users. By following Dewey's (1939) open conceptualisation of valuation as a practice conducted in all kind of activities, the chapter describes values in relation to the users' interests and their frames for understanding and providing meaning to their interactions on Facebook. The analysis moves in various directions and around the activities of the three groups of participants mentioned in the methodology chapter to show how diverse forms of valuations coexisted, collaborated and competed on Facebook. These initial descriptions are associated with the chapter's main goal of describing the variety of frames to understand the value of users' participation on Facebook.

The chapter is divided into two main sections and has the main goal of showing the different types of practices values observed in the studied Facebook pages. The five subsections in the first part of the chapter do not suggest rigidly compartmentalised or exclusive activities of certain groups and do not try to develop a unique argument across the different sections. Instead these subsections move from one group of actors to another with the aim of showing the coexistence of multiple values and logics for actions on same Facebook pages. The second section aims to provide a general conceptualisation to understand a dynamic in which those multiple interests and valuations coexist. In line with the main thesis' ethnographic approach from a user perspective, the chapter proposes the term *Account Centred Value* to contribute to the analysis of dynamics of value production that focuses on the interaction of different actors with a *productive public* and Facebook's specific affordances that have been previously overlook by other terms.

The first subsection of the first part considers the value of Facebook from the perspective and practices of journalists who covered FA's campaign and used the platform to interact with a broad public. Here, Facebook is analysed as part of a media ecosystem, where different actors coexisted and connected to obtain and circulate information with the goal of catching the attention of diverse audiences. The second subsection describes the practices of a group of Facebook managers, political consultants and professional campaigners connected to the FA's National Commission team. The analysis of this section focuses on a distinctive logic for valuating Facebook based on the use of metrics. They established campaign targets and collect evidence on the contents' performance of for gaining public support and visibility. The third subsection considers the commercial interest of a minority of users who visited FA's Facebook pages with goals

completely different to the political aims of the party's supporters. This section aims to show how the low threshold for participation on Facebook allowed the collision of incompatible frames for action on those pages supporting the FA. The fourth subsection analyses the decision of removing a post from the Wall of an Open Group to illustrate the importance of moral values for the participation on *productive public* of the FA. Here, the observation of users' participation shows competing and irreconcilable frames of actions that cannot be explained by the idea of collaboration suggested by the conceptualisation of a heterarchical designs of digital interfaces (Stark, 2009, pxvii, p5). The last subsection related to different forms values illustrates the activities and interests of volunteers who campaigned for the alternative presidential candidature of Constanza Moreira in the FA internal elections. Their participations on Facebook are analysed in relation to the possibility of building esteem and reputation. In line with Arvidsson and Peitersen's (2013) conceptualisation of *ethical value*, the user's capacity to generate responses from groups of left-wing supporters are mostly understood from the personal motivations and valuation associated to the possibility of building a process of identification with a broader community and a political project.

The second section provides a general analysis of all different forms of value and suggests that public's attention and engagement may be understood as a universal need and asset for many practices. The term *Account Centred Value* (ACV) considers that this need is satisfied by connecting with a network of users around personalised spaces and frames for collaborative participations. The term considers the multivalence and the popularity of Facebook in relation to the possibility of collaboration, coexistence and competition of diverse actors on a same space which constantly measures the public reactions and allow lose form of connections. ACV does not aim to flatter the ethnographical observations of the multiple forms of valuations but, it is thought of as a contribution to wider debates around the production of value out of the publics' participation on Facebook. This sections also reviews previous concept mentioned in the literature review and explain its contributions to the elaboration of a new term.

Section 1 – Multiple forms of value.

Section 1.1.1 - Building up a news channel for a national campaign.

Raúl was journalist following the 2014 FA's national campaign for one of the most prestigious and read weekly magazines in Uruguay. He had been working for almost 4 years in the politics section and covered the legislative sessions of the national congress, which he sometimes followed by looking at politicians' tweets "because of lack of time to fulfil multiple commitments" (Raúl, interview, 2014). He considered Facebook and Twitter as sources of information and the best available method of keeping ahead of current affairs. For him, to "look at Twitter is the first thing to do in morning (...) you will first find the information on social media" (Raúl, interview, 2014).

He originally, thought of Facebook as a medium to connect with close friends and Twitter as a more professional tool for finding information. But, he soon realised the opportunities of using Facebook also as a source of information and as a channel for building an audience. His Facebook account was synchronised with Twitter and Instagram, so every publication that he made on those media was also published on Facebook. This synchronisation did not take place in the inverse direction and some of the material he published was only on Facebook.

Raúl described his magazine's online policy that was limited, imprecise and did not facilitate connections and sharing articles on SNS. The magazine's directors prioritised the paper format as journalistic and business model and had a pay subscription to an online site that was a secondary channel with limited access to some articles. He thought that they were wasting an opportunity to connect with a wider public, and although he had to specify his commitment to provide exclusive material for them, he knew that only a small part of all his work was published by the magazine after a lengthy editorial process. Facebook was a space where he was able to post content without having to wait the time of an editorial process. As a result, he decided to use Facebook as valuable channel to publish material and scoops to promote his own work.

Other magazines and newspapers had a more active online policy, and Issac had a completely different approach to Facebook. He was also working in politics section for another magazine that considered the FA

campaign to be especial for its readers. He was able to observe, on the magazine's WordPress dashboard, how the possibility of re-publishing articles on Facebook had increased exponentially the numbers of visits to the magazine's site (Issac, interview, 2014).

Raúl and Issac considered that Facebook was only effective to communicate a message if people were able to recognise the identity and authenticity of account. They understood the information accreditation to be a necessary component of journalism and even more important on a medium surrounded by the notion of fakes news and data manipulation that has been already linked to Red Coloured Party and the use of bots on Twitter in February 2014. For these journalists, the possibility of distinguishing trustful information from unreliable information and the trustfulness of the sources was vital in platform where creating an account with any name was easily done. The most popular parties and presidential candidates used the Facebook verification services that added a small light blue tick symbol at the right side of the page's name. This guaranteed the identity of an account⁶⁹. Journalists could quote information posted on verified accounts as official channels of communication. They could say that was the position of public figure or institution and included it in their stories. Similarly, Raúl considered authenticity and reputation as key elements for posting articles, and he used his personal account with his real name as a form of being trusted and recognisable on Facebook.

For Raul (interview, 2014), a good article needed to catch the public's attention with a story that could bring into debate something that was controversial or implied a change in public matters. Raúl acknowledge the active role and responsibility of journalists in using information from Facebook and its further dissemination, but he also described the journalists' priority of exposing controversial material and catching the public's attention. His description of what was required to gain this attention partially agrees with the analysis of a populist style of communication and the use of direct language by actors who denounced others of wrong doing (Engesser et al., 2017). Journalist could have a role in spreading political speeches that were controversial and could be sometimes inaccurate or not well supported. He understood this as part of a

⁶⁹ This required sending digital proofs of identity and a monetary transactions to the Facebook customer service team that checked the information and enabled the verification.

tempting possibility because of the interest in obtaining a news scoop on Facebook. But, the publishing unchecked information was recognised as a bad journalist practice that many regular users on Facebook do not consider. The use of this platform as source of news was a regular practice, but it could sometimes magnify poor professional practices among journalists who in the quest of giving a first news might reproduce information without previously checking it (Issac, interview, 2014; Paula, interview, 2014). In line with the analysis of online populism and news circulation provided in the section 2.3 of the second chapter, SNSs provided users, including politicians, with the possibility of spreading information without passing through the filters and selection criteria that Raúl (interview, 2014) and Issac (interview, 2014) considered necessary to apply before using and re-circulate information taken for Facebook.

Section 1.1.2 – Promoting the FA campaign on the news.

Campaigners were interested in catching the public's attention and part of their aims on Facebook was to transcend their regular followers on Facebook. Raúl (interview, 2014) referred to the notion of "transcendence" and "publications that transcend" to talk about the eventful situations in which a publication originally posted on Facebook could become the source for a newspaper or TV news. Users on Facebook pages were mostly understood as part of *echo chambers* that "amplify your message and do not change the mind of those who already have decided their vote" (Valenti, interview, 2014). Publicists and campaign staff saw Facebook mostly as a network of friends and "most people who are connected on Facebook already have similar political views" (Carlos, interview, 2014). Similarly, Ciudadana (interview, 2014), Pedro (interview, 2014), Lenina (interview, 2014) or Leandro (interview, 2014) considered that most users on the pages of political parties were the same party's supporters.

For some FA's campaign managers, a successful campaign on SNSs occurred when the content was taken by a newspaper or television programme (Carlos, interview, 2014; Mariano, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014). Well-known journalists in well-established media outlets such as El País, El Observador, Canal 10 or Canal 4 could validate information in a way that SNSs could not, and positioned the issue posted on Facebook as part of public debate to be considered by a much larger and diverse public. Raúl had used pictures published on SNSs to prove that the actual amount of people at a political rally were not as many

as some media sources had claimed. Similarly, other journalists were able to observe the use of Photoshop in pictures on the FA campaign final act uploaded on FA's official Facebook and wrote articles about the manipulation of images as part of a political scandal that the FA was able to clarify and quickly minimised⁷⁰.

Valenti was a relentless journalist and a prominent political public figure who wrote articles about Uruguayan politics and was often involved in TV debates. He was also the director of a news agency and advertisement company associated with the FA campaign in 2014. He has been affiliated with left-wing parties for decades and his career as a political advisor, campaigner and publicist has made him a public figure who supported the FA. For him, the only way to work in a political campaign was to be fully aligned with the party's goal and ideas (Valenti, interview, 2014).

Valenti started using Facebook and Twitter to increase his audience with news already published on his online portal and to share and comment news with other users. To build an audience on Facebook, he sets himself targets, much like playing a game with their audience (Valenti, interview, 2014). As a well-known publicist working for the FA, he said on Twitter and Facebook – both public and open to all users – that in order to win the elections, he needed to reach certain number of followers on his Facebook account by specific dates. In doing so, Valenti encouraged people to connect and follow him on Facebook. Here, online Facebook indicators appear as a method for measuring the size of the audience and a personal game played with the number of connections made.

Valenti associated the measuring of followers with an *attention economy* on Facebook that considered the value of his account in relation to its capacity building a growing audience and catch the users' attentions. Valenti (interview, 2014) repeatedly talked about a Youtube video called 'Así funciona el mundo' [this is how the world works], that he produced for the FA 2014 campaign and was shared thousands of times on Facebook. He considered the great impact of this videos and mentioned that more than 300,000 people have been reached with it. These indicators were measuring the users' engagement with the video that he had posted on his account.

⁷⁰ See the epigraph of chapter 1.

For him, the possibility of reaching a relative high number of Likes or users' visualisations was related to the intellectual value of the content and its ability to eliciting emotions in the public. To be interesting and have impact, a message needed to provide good quality information. "For a good piece of story, the information needs to have a clear point of view and well supported message" (Valenti, interview, 2014). Raúl (interview, 2014) and Issac (interview, 2014) also considered the importance of establishing a reputation among a public to build an audience and facilitate the users' engagement. In line with the idea of *ethical capital* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013), the message needed to be said by someone who was trusted and resonated in what the public were interested in reading and know more about.

To understand why campaigners were ashamed about the altered image of the FA final act on the river bank (see the first chapter's epilogue), it is important to consider the damage create to the reputation of the campaign team and their capacity to communicate trustful information on the Fan Page. The message was clearly in agreement with the interest of a public who wanted to see a massive and spectacular political demonstration. And, it was able to elicit emotional responses from a number of users that it was usually much lower on other content previously posted on the Fan Page. However, a valuation on the veracity of the picture indicated that it was violating the basic minimum ethical standards for communicating and had damaging the credibility and accuracy of the page to provide information about the campaign.

Not only was Facebook considered as a means to grow an audience, but it has also been defined by Valenti, Issac and Raúl as part of a paradigmatic shift in the way of communicating with the public. They considered Facebook as a medium with its own language and dynamics which requires a learning process that was being discovered and evolving in Uruguay. "Here, the public have the need to say what they think and feel about a topic, a situation or a person; and they also want to be heard" (Issac, interview, 2014). Similarly, they saw the relevance or lack of importance of a content in relation to how the public was reacting and interact with it. A FA's campaign manager considered that on Facebook "topics wash away from the campaign if nobody interacts with them" (Mariela, interview, 2014). The public had the ability to share content and make it more visible or ephemeral in the network.

“People have the chance to make comments, to say something; and that brings the opportunity of considering what the others are saying (...) there are some people who make creative and genial comments. The exchange of opinions, and the conversation with others is great source of inspiration” (Valenti, interview, 2014).

Valenti considered this as an innovative form of exchanging ideas and as source of inspiration to rethink political ideas and sensing the feelings of the public that could contribute for the making of campaign spots and writing an article on what it matters for the public in a campaign.

Section 1.2 – The value of Facebook for professional campaigners: *information management, paid advertisement and professional services*

The National Commission was regularly composed by a handful of permanent staff who directly reported to the FA's president, Mónica Xavier. But, the national elections marked an especial event for the future of the FA and demanded exceptional efforts from different groups inside FA and external support from volunteers and professional. The team was responsible for centralising and coordinating tasks with Facebook managers from different parties conforming the coalition, external publicists and political consultant, internal advisors, different groups of volunteers and contractors and technicians working with specific equipment's to cover the rallies and activities across the country.

While observing the campaign activities of different actors at the National Commission, it became evident that winning the elections was the main reason that brought together all these actors. But, their approach to Facebook cannot be described faithfully in a single and unique way. This section does not describe in detail the activities of this team – analysed in the next chapter –, but it aims to introduce forms of value and logics for actions that this research only observed in this group. What distinguished them from others was how they self-defined as professional and adopted a logic for acting in which calculations of efficacy, costs and benefits included monetary transactions for advertisement and standardised mechanism for information management and monitoring the public.

In the 2014 elections, campaigners from all the Uruguayan parties agreed that Facebook was a necessary tool⁷¹ to communicate with a massive public of users (Carlos, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Gabriel, interview, 2014; Mieres, interview, 2014; Moreira, interview, 2014; Nicolas, interview, 2014). “In the MPP there was request directly from el Pepe⁷² regarding the importance of using social media” (Nicolas, interview, 2014). And, the FA National Commission had been managing a Facebook Fan Page since September 2011. This page was regularly and systematically fed with content promoting of the party’s achievements and official messages that in 2014 included the promotion of presidential formula of Tabaré Vázquez and Raúl Sendic.

To understand why the National Commission used a Fan Page, the architecture of Facebook needs to be at least partially examined. The idea of a building up a large public without any restrictions in the number of users, and the possibility of promoting content by paid advertisement are central in the selection of these types of Facebook pages⁷³. When entering a Fan Page, administrators find the Insight Page with hundreds of different indicators for understanding the public reactions to contents and messages prompting them to define a public and boost the reach of the contents. The Insight Page’s dashboards was designed to target, measure and promote further interactions with the publics as part of the idea of building up a public and campaign to achieve more and better results in terms of communicative and promotional services.

However, as it was mentioned in the very first pages of this thesis, professional campaigners considered that the use of Facebook was “still in nappies” (Gabriel, interview, 2014). The 2014 FA campaign showed limited resources in comparison to those used by international companies such as the infamous Cambridge

⁷¹ Lorenzo, the director of a marketing and public opinion research company, was the only exception to this opinion observed among consultants and campaign managers. He considered that Facebook was not relevant for political communication. For him, its popularity was declining, and becoming and obsolete medium (Lorenzo, interview, 2014). But, he was not working with any political party at the time of the elections and his views were not supported by any studies (Lorenzo, interview, 2014), and only reflect his opinion.

⁷² El Pepe is the nickname of José Alberto Mujica Cordano. He was the Uruguayan president between 2010-5 and leader of the MPP, which it was the party with more voters inside the FA.

⁷³ To review the differences among the three main types of Facebook pages see the second section of chapter 1.

Analytica⁷⁴ and other companies in the USA and Europe. The FA was still trying to understand the potential impact of Facebook for political marketing (Paula, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Nicolas, interview, 2014). This research observed that at least one party inside the FA had the possibility to conduct segmentation techniques with anonymised and demographic geographically located data. But, this team did not have enough time and resources to apply any specific strategy based on that technique (Federico, interview, 2014). Their use of Facebook metrics – a theme elaborated in the next chapter – was based on descriptive analysis on how certain topics were performing well in terms of public responses to the content on a page.

For this team, value production on Facebook was connected to the possibility of catching the public's attention with party's messages and gained public support. And paid advertisement were means to increase the content's circulation with which more public support could be obtained. Publicist like Valenti (interview, 2014) and campaigner managers such as Daniel (interview, 2014), Federico (interview, 2014), Mariela (interview, 2014) or Mariana (interview, 2014) knew that advertisement on Facebook was much cheaper than any other kind of media. By looking and trusting Facebook's measures, they understood that it was possible to reach many people with a very small amount of the total campaign's funds, and they considered advertisement on this platform as good value for money.

Similarly, this group of campaigners considered indicators as part of a logic that understood goals in quantitative terms. They aimed at reaching more people and Facebook indicators provided evidence on the impact of their activities towards that goal. For them, it became obvious that paid advertisement was necessary to show and achieve the increasing public support and content reach on this page. As a result, being on Facebook for these professional teams involved monetary transaction from which Facebook obtained profits and publicist and campaign managers the numbers needed to meet their targets. Pablo a

⁷⁴ Marketing techniques using psychological profiling models have been used before the Brexit referendum and the 2016 USA elections (Gibney, 2018) and Facebook have provided targeted advertisement since its very beginnings (Edosomwan et al., 2011, p5; Kirkpatrick, 2010). However, the recent media coverage on the topic of fake news and manipulation of users have been connected with specific politicians such as Donald Trump and the Brexit (Lewis and Hilder, 2018) that have risen strong emotions.

consultant working on digital campaigns for the election put this idea about advertisement on Facebook in plain words:

“being in the campaign requires parties to play a game in which you need to pay advertisement. If you don’t pay your content will not reach the number of people you need” (...) For doing a competitive campaign and show that you are doing better than the other parties you need to pay, otherwise the other parties will swipe you out” (Pablo, interview, 2014).

If the main goal was to gather the public’s attention and support, the campaign team understood that paid advertisement was part of the necessary business to work with Facebook. But, they also considered the autonomy of the Facebook public to support or ignore the page. Any time someone used the Share Button, the posts were re-published on her or his own pages and became visible to some of his or her Facebook’s friends. Similarly, the use of the Like Button worked as a form of content recommendation between networked accounts via the Facebook friendship mechanism (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013; Gerlitz and Lury, 2014). To achieve this, they considered crucial to have good quality and appealing content⁷⁵ (Ciudadana, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Mariano, interview, 2014; Nicolas, interview, 2014; Valenti, interview, 2014).

To set targets was part of continuous monitoring process that involved reports such as those created in this study to collaborate with the FA and external services such as the reports commissioned by Federico. They were part of a logic that required “organised information in a way that we can look and understand what is important for them [the public on Facebook] and for reaching our objectives” (Federico, interview, 2014).

External consultants considered and promote the importance of these indicators to offer their services and innovate on their political marketing approaches. For Cristian, a research director of a marketing agency, the professional value of Facebook was part of what Savage and Burrows (2007) described as a transformation in the form of conducting research and data collection. For him, one of the main reasons leading this transformation was the significantly lower costs of online data collection. A second reason

⁷⁵ The following chapter pays specially attention to what they described as professional quality of content and the use of metrics to justify their activities on this platform.

was related to the speed and availability of information that Facebook provided from people across the whole country. This was especially important during the electoral race when events could quickly change and modify the political scenario (Martin, interview, 2014; Silvana, interview, 2014). In these circumstances, Cristian considered that traditional door to door polls were not a viable option, and he believed that at some point online surveys will be replacing older methodologies completely. A third and final reason was the possibility of providing the public with the freedom to voice their own opinion at any time. For Cristian (interview, 2014), Facebook “is as having a permanent focus group”.

Research directors such as Cristian or Walter also considered data from a commercial perspective and understood that the counting of Likes was “already freely provided by Facebook” (Walter, interview, 2014), and it did not provide any comparative advantage for selling their services. They considered the Facebook Like as relevant information, and the numbers Shares could be considered as an indicator of a viral campaign (Carlos, interview, 2014; Daniel, interview, 2014). But, as a business director, Walter was interested in developing and offering more refined services. The issue was how to understand this data and repurposes in useful ways for the client and the marketing agency own interests. The creation of reports with information classified, sorted and visualised in relevant forms was a first step to tailor a service for clients and add up value to Facebook data.

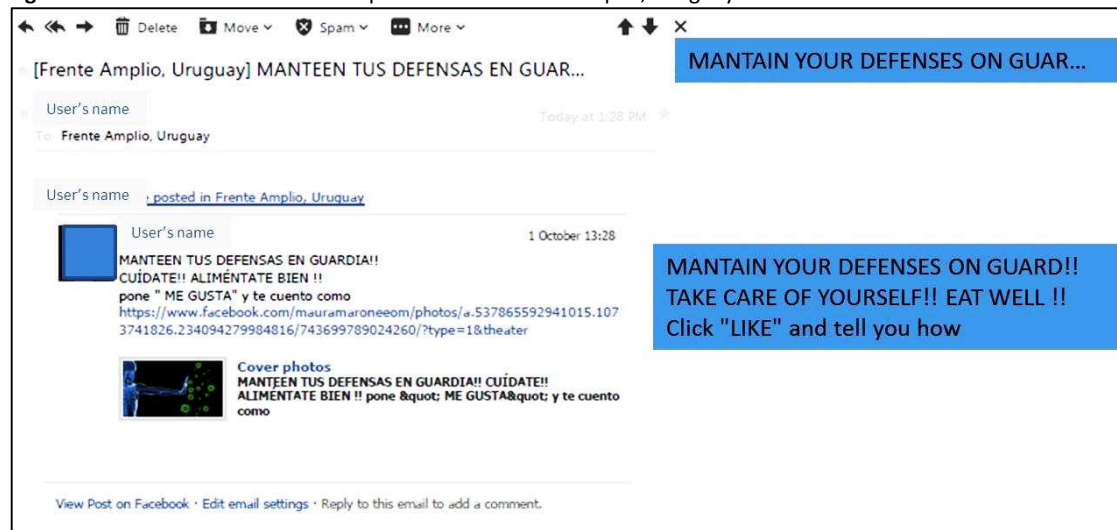
The production of external and professional reports created by those consultants provided an analytical frame to understand how the campaign was moving and allowed the basis to conduct valuation on the effectiveness of the actions taken by campaigners to disseminate content and gain public support. For Federico, (interview, 2014) “the most important thing for us it was to see which publications had the most impact” and he needed these reports to decide what had gone well and we had to be changed. In line with Arvidsson and Peitersen’s (2013, p44-5) analysis, the vast and constant data production on Facebook was not valuable without the selection of a frame to understand information in meaningful manners. By having those reports, campaign managers could be set targets and had a *reality test* (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006) backed up by professional external consultant on who all the party, including the top leadership trusted.

Section 1.3 – Free advertisement for commercial value: *an undesirable intervention*

Campaigners needed to gain the public support for the electoral race, and unknown Facebook users were constantly invited to like Fan Pages and join Open Groups that required low thresholds level of participation. These users had different interests for visiting and posting content on these pages. Users trying to support and strengthen a political goal mixed with posts advertising “the best homemade cakes in Montevideo” or money loans – possibly connected to online scams. Posts providing commercial services on pages campaigning for the FA were considered inappropriate by most users and page administrators, but this did not stop people from advertising products and services constantly. They joined Groups and visited Fan Pages with several thousands of members and followers to try to catch attention of the public with comments and posts.

The message below in figure 7 was posted on ‘Frente Amplio, Uruguay’ to offer a healthy food supplement that could allegedly boost the immune system. This post was recognised as an undesirable and harmful disruption of the users’ attention on a page created for other purposes and quickly removed by the administrators⁷⁶.

Figures 7: Pictures of advertisement published on Frente Amplio, Uruguay on 1 Oct. Received via email notification.



Source: personal email sent from www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/. Translation conducted by the author.

⁷⁶ The post was accessed as notifications sent to the researcher email inbox.

These types of interventions were clearly associated to the possibility getting new clients from free advertisement on Facebook pages. Without aiming at providing a final explanation, it might be possible to argue that the lack of commercial advertisements on Groups with smaller number of users such as 'For a Frente Amplio Closer to the people' might have been related to the lower chances for selling products on less populated pages. This hypothetical explanation of the influence of public metrics may be linked to the public display of the number of users showed on popular Fan Pages⁷⁷ and Groups such as 'Frente Amplio, Uruguay' that constantly attracted spams.

The value of a post aimed at generating a commercial gain was considered by many Group's members and administrators as outside the valid frames for acting on a group created to campaigning for the FA. Similarly, they were considered distractions for the public and damaged the quality of a space aimed to support political goals (Arturo, interview, 2014; Jimena, interview, 2014). These clashes between interests and proposal for action showed that competition on Facebook did not only exist among rival pages such as the FA official Fan Page and other political parties. Competition could also take place inside Groups and among members striving to occupy a space on the page's Wall. As a result, it is possible to suggest that users could be in dynamics of collaboration to add value to for a specific type of actions or in competition for the space and public's attention. Commercial advertisement posted by users directly on the Walls were clearly in competition with the political goal of FA supporters. But in other case, the idea for supporting the FA and attacking political competitors was subjected to different interpretations that generated internal discussions such as the one described in the next section.

Section 1.4 – Moral values.

On the 10 October 2014 Jimena found a picture on the Wall of the Group 'Frente Amplio, Uruguay' that contributed to her daily disappointment with some users' interventions. The picture was not published as new

⁷⁷ Fan Page visitors were not able to create a new independent entry, but they could add adverts as comments below the posts generated by the administrators. The use of comments on Fan Pages and Groups was a common practice that prevented administrators from receiving an email notification.

post, but as a comment, which made less visible than post and more difficult to detect. She considered this picture extremely gross and did not hesitate in removing it immediately. Her strong reaction and disapproval clearly illustrated the different ethical and moral views hold by the various members of the Group. The picture found by Jimena included nudity and a sexual display that may be also unpleasant to an unaware reader of this thesis. The head of a naked man was digitally replaced with the head of the National Party presidential candidate, and a FA's flag added on the man's bottom. The National Party slogan⁷⁸, 'La Positiva', and its logo appears on a suppository in a reference to a sexual passive attitude that needs to be considered in the local macho culture. The flag in the man's bottom might be partly associated to a response to Lacalle Pou's specific challenge to the FA candidate during the campaign⁷⁹. And it can be understood as an attempt to degrade the image of the National Party candidate who was portrayed in a passive sexual role that in the Latin culture and Uruguay is associated with a position of submission and lack of masculinity (Bourdieu, 2001, p21).

The image was posted by someone who tried to be aligned with the political frame of this Facebook Group, and aimed at representing the FA superiority over a humiliated and derided National candidate. The clear surreal presence of a flag in the digital modify image of Lacalle Pou might suggest the intention of applying a humour keying, in Goffman's (1986) terms. And it may be possible to speculate that the user was trying to make a joke. However, the esthetical and moral values used in the image were very different from those of Jimena and other members of the Group.

⁷⁸ The actual National slogan was 'Por la Positiva' and it made reference to a new positive way of acting that was sometimes associated with general and abstract philosophy of life.

⁷⁹ This specific situation is described in chapter 6.

Figure 8: Digitally modify picture of a naked body with Lacalle Pou's head and the FA flag.



Source: User's Facebook personal picture folder.

Jimena deleted the picture and justified her action by saying that minimum moral and ethical standards were required on an Open Group aimed to publicly support FA and foster dialogue among people. As a secondary teacher, she considered to have the responsibility of educate people, and this was also applicable to the position of page administrator for political party with ethical and moral principle needed to build a society. Offensive language, insults or pornography usually touched Jimena's moral strings, and in this case, she immediately decided to delete the image. But, she considered necessary to explain to other users why this behaviour was inappropriate. She used the Facebook Messenger to facilitate communication and try to find a common base to establish what was appropriate and what was not on the Group:

"People are tired of the swearword. The middle class and educated people don't like that. We eliminated the swearword. And the people have stayed and understood this and stopped publishing it. Some of them already know that we take all that out and, and when they publish something, they say explicitly: did you see that this time I well-behaved, as a comment (...) Diego was one of them. He used to publish all kind of insults and those little-bubbles [texts on memes] (...) And, he used to get really angry and said all kind of things to me. This was on private [direct message between the two of them via Facebook Messenger]. I explained to him that the group has norms; and what he was doing was not right. He changed what he publishes. Time to time he comes with something that is outrageous and I delete it. But, he learned" (Jimena, interview, 2014).

In line with Miller (2011) and Miller and Sinanan (2017), participation on Facebook cannot be understood outside a local culture in which people are immersed. However, the distinction between what was appropriate and inappropriate was unclear on Facebook. Nudity and sexual references were clearly unacceptable for most people in Uruguay and Jimena did not hesitate in deleting the picture. However, Facebook had a low threshold level for participation and allowed the emergence of memes that applied sexual languages and images commonly used in popular jokes. These types of interventions were approved or disapproved by pages administrators who tailored ethical rules explicitly or implicitly.

Similarly, ethics and moral values for conduct of behaviour were clearly present and explicitly mentioned in the About subpage of the FA official Fan Page. To manage a Facebook pages required to take care of be responsible of dealing with insults, images with explicit sexual content that only the page administrator could remove. The value of Pages was also related the curation of content for avoiding inappropriate and irrelevant content. This control was practiced with the collaboration of regular users who could denounce content as inappropriate and automatically raise the attention of the page administrator. This specific topic is analysed in chapter six and considered in relation to what Albrechtslund (2008) defined as participatory surveillance or lateral surveillance (Andrejevic, 2002) in which a feeling of empowerment may be experience by providing users with the ability to say what they considered good or bad.

Section 1.5 – Networks for Constanza Moreira: *an alternative project inside the FA.*

This section focuses on the analysis of a political group that supported Constanza Moreira and used Facebook to promote her for an alternative presidential candidate inside the FA. Moreira's candidature for the internal FA's election publicly started and was harnessed on Facebook. And the actions of this group are especially interesting to understand the initiatives of independent supporters who relied on Facebook to communicate with a broader audience. People like Edna, Ciudadana, Mariano, Lenina, Carlos or Leandro described the parties' traditional spaces for participation - the local committees - as meaningless. They had participated in these committees and found that they were spaces to reproduce the speeches and decisions taken by the party's leaders without any possibilities for political renovation, meaningful discussions or the advancement of left-wing actions.

They created Facebook Pages and Groups and gathered people who were looking for a political alternative and quickly grew in numbers to create a *productive public* who shared a project. This latter turned to be a much larger and complex political space known as Casa Grande that was supported by different people and nine relatively small groups inside the FA. This was capitalised by Senator Constanza Moreira a cannot be reduced to the use of online platforms. But, her candidature was first publicly suggested and supported on Facebook by educated middle class people, who could participate and voice their political interests on this platform (Ciudadana, interview, 2014; Mariano, interview, 2014).

To understand how these independent activists were able to spark an independent and left-wing project inside the FA, it is useful to consider the specific context in which they proposed an alternative candidate. As previously mentioned in chapter 1, the FA is the result of a political coalition of several parties that were able to overcome political divisions and found a common ground and an internal system to take decisions based on the party's national congresses hold every 30 months (Frente Amplio, 2017). But, each party inside the FA had its own history, culture (de Giorgi, 2013) and an internal structure and channels, such as magazines and Facebook Pages, to communicate with supporters. They also had their own political objectives, campaigned for different legislative representatives and could suggest presidential candidates in the internal elections.

Before Moreira was promoted as a candidate on Facebook, politicians and supporters had expressed their disagreement with the lack of choices for the FA's presidential candidature (Abelando, 2013; Bianchi, 2013; La Red 21, 2013; Mariano, interview, 2014; Lenina, interview, 2014; Edna, interview, 2014; Ciudadana, interview, 2014; Leandro, interview, 2014; Pedro, interview, 2014). The former president Tabaré Vázquez had been nominated by three of the FA's largest parties – the MPP, the Socialist Party and Frente Liber Seregni – without any internal discussions. For many, Vázquez was the candidate of the status quo associated with the more conservative and political centre position in the coalition. Vázquez did not represent the political aspirations of many supporters. And, he was especially criticised among young, progressive and further left-wing voters who supported Moreira as a political alternative (Ciudadana, interview, 2014; Constanza, interview, 2014; Edna, interview, 2014; La Red 21, 2013). The emergence of

an alternative candidature can be thought as a fracture in the collective action of the FA due to the impossibility to generate consensus around Vázquez as the representative of the whole coalition. This tension inside was solved by applying the democratic principle that involved internal elections in a group that understood the importance of staying together as an electoral front against other parties.

Constanza Moreira's was supported by many volunteers who actively campaigned for her at the FA's internal elections and at the national elections for a position in the congress' upper chamber. Many of these people called themselves "independent"; a term also used by Moreira and people affiliated to political parties⁸⁰. They sought to create an alternative space to express their political ideas and hopes, and they understood that they could do this by promoting Moreira as political candidate. They used an emotional rhetoric and progressive message that had an echo on several left-wing groups who were looking for a political change. Below, the fragment of an open letter to Constanza Moreira shows exhortative expressions used to conjure euphoria about the rise of a leader and a political community. This type of self-motivational message was also found in popular movements campaigning on Facebook such as the indignados in Spain who demanded an alternative against the corrupted status quo (Gerbaudo, 2016, p264).

"I understand that it is a place that you never thought to occupy, but you are the only charismatic leader in Uruguay who can represent us. You earned our trust on the basis of your courage, Intelligence, common sense, the causes you fight for, clear (leftwing) ideas, coherence and honesty above all, ethics... that value increasingly scarce in today's world, especially in the world of politics.

From the grassroots we see you as the only left-wing voice able to deal with the real challenges. And when I say from the grassroots, I am not only talking about the Networks⁸¹. All communists that I find; each empepista⁸², each independent, and many socialists. We want you, although no many dare to say it loudly. The top leadership will do according to what they think is the best thing. But down

⁸⁰ Nine groups supported Moreira as a candidate in the 2014 elections: Magnolia, Ir, Partido por la Victoria del Pueblo, Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, Movimiento de Integración Alternativo, Alternativa Frenteamplista, Frenteamplistas por el Cambio, Resistir and Izquierda en Marcha.

⁸¹ Here, the Networks refers to group called Network for Constanza who clearly supported the Senator.

⁸² Empepista refers to members of the largest political party in the FA called MPP (Movimiento de Participación Popular).

here, it is your name the one that ever comes back once again, even from unexpected mouths” (Ciudadana, anonymous letter on Facebook, 2013)

This evocative and emotive public post titled Open letter to Constanza Moreira was published on Facebook by Ciudadana on 14 July 2013 and was noticed and comment by newspapers such as La República (2013) which provided the project with a different medium where the idea of Moreira as a political alternative started circulating among a broader public. As a trained journalist and experienced political activist in Uruguay, Ciudadana managed well an emotional rhetoric for public speeches. And, in line with the argument in the first section of this chapter, the letter could be considered as an example of a successful post that was able to reach other media and public with a political news about Moreira’s candidature.

In this letter, it is also possible to find what Mudde (2004) and Ardití refer (2004) as the use of inclusive language in political speeches. The word “grassroots” fitted a broad and amorphous public and could have several connotations. This allows different users to interpret messages according to different frames (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012, p744; Engesser et al., 2016, p5-6) and feel part of broad proposal and group. What Ciudadana mentioned as left-wing ideas, causes, and ethics could also be understood in different manners as part of common project that was unambiguously identified with left-wing groups. Gerbaudo (2015) and Engesser et al. (2016) describe this type discursive style used by political movements and leaders as part of their need to catch the attention of the public in an environment overloaded with information.

Ciudadana was clearly interested in having an impact in the public and looked at the number of Likes, Shares and Comments to see how many people endorsed and re-circulated the content that she posted on Facebook. But, her efforts to support Casa Grande and the “Constansismo” were completely voluntary and not attached to any formal contract such those signed by Raúl or Issac with magazines or the professional campaigners committed to achieve campaign targets. She did not have a targeted number of fans to be reached, and she considered comments to be stimulating and a recognition of her contributions to build a political project. The value of those responses was related to her previous experiences in specific network of users.

For Mariano, the numbers of Likes were “an indicator of how many people have read you” (Mariano, interview, 2014), but the most important thing for him was to know that he was posting something interesting for a public. He was happy being an influential bloggers and political commentator who was been able to build what Arvidsson and Peitersen (2013) describe as *ethical capital*. He has developed a strategy to have various publics by posting different types of content on separate accounts that worked as a playground that allowed him to create fictional characters and write with irony about political stereotypes. Similarly, he used his personal account to make funny political comments about political candidates. To campaign for Moreira as a page manager for the senator campaign, he adopted a different type of language aimed at fostering enthusiasm on left-wing public hoping for a political renovation.

Ciudadana describes her motivations and satisfaction in campaigning for Moreira as part of her last hope in a political project in which she could positioned herself as left-wing intellectual and valuable member of broader group. In the past, she was led down by the traditional and rigid vertical structure of the Uruguayan Communist Party. They did not provide her with a space to propose new initiatives or put in practices her ideas. She ended up feeling excluded from the party that she described as ruled by prominent leaders and political structures (Ciudadana, interview, 2014). For Ciudadana, the campaign for Moreira and Casa Grande was the possibility of having a voice and a name recognised by a group as part of a *collective identity* (Melucci, 1995a) that provided a goal and meaning to her actions.

Ciudadana considered that her time and effort on Facebook was rewarded by the public who responded with warm and encouraging responses. She felt recognised as a referent in intellectual discussions and especially appreciated the positive responses left by other users that touched her “deeply in my hearth and makes me happy with what I do. I feel that I am having in role to fill” (Ciudadana, interview, 2014).

Figure 9: Comments to left by users to Ciudadana's Open Letter to Constanza Moreira on the Facebook.

Ciudadana and 70 others like this.		Top Comments ▾
36 shares	26 comments	
<p>User1 Dico el Ñato que no cree en la redes sociales y lo de Constanza es sólo un intento de asegurarse los votos para una banca en el Senado. Esta soberbia stalinista me tiene, por decirlo de un modo elegante, repodrido. Creo que las cúpulas no quieren dar la posibilidad de que se produzca un batacazo.</p> <p>Like · Reply · 7 · 14 July 2013 at 21:07</p>	<p>The narrow minded says that they don't believe in social media and this is just an attempt from Constanza to secure votes for a place at the Senate. To say it nicely, I am so sick of that Stalinist arrogance. I believe that the upper echelons do not want to give the chance for a real change.</p>	
<p>User2 Sé que las comparaciones pueden doler, pero me resulta inevitable, decirte, Constanza, que despues de Hugo Cores, lo tuyo me resulta esclarecedor, como para constituirte en un referente de estos tiempos. Tambien sé, como lo desarrolla brillantemente Ciudadana, las dificultades que implica desafiar la estructura... En todos los casos, en cualquiera de tus decisiones, estoy contigo...!!</p> <p>Like · Reply · 10 · 14 July 2013 at 16:12 · Edited</p>	<p>I know that comparisons can hurt, but I find inevitable, to tell you, Constanza, that after Hugo Cores, yours [example] is enlightening, and makes you a reference of these time. As Ciudadana brilliantly elaborated, I also know of the difficulties involved in challenging the structure... In all cases, and whatever your decision is, I'm with you ...!</p>	
<p>User3 gracias pero te quiero de candidata otro no voto</p> <p>Like · Reply · 5 · 14 July 2013 at 17:25</p> <p>↳ 1 Reply</p>	<p>Thanks but I want you for candidate [.] I will not vote another</p>	
<p>User4 gracias Ciudadana haciendo mias tus palabras....., te digo Constanza, siendo tu candidata dan ganas de ir a pelear la interna, dan ganas de salir a dar batalla por una causa que se sintió justa en algun momento y que hoy nos tiene desganados, des... See More</p> <p>Like · Reply · 5 · 14 July 2013 at 17:17</p>	<p>thanks Ciudadana [.] I make this words mine... to tell to Constanza, [that] by being you [the] candidate [.] it makes ones to want to go to fight for the internal (election), to give battle for a cause that it was felt right at some point and today has us despondent, disillusioned...</p>	
<p>User1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Porque estimula la militancia. 2. Porque todos merecen tener quien les represente. 3. Porque el FA no debe temer a la democracia interna.... See More <p>Like · Reply · 3 · 14 July 2013 at 21:03</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Because it stimulates militancy. 2. Because everyone deserves to be represented. 3. Because the FA should not fear internal democracy 	
<p>User5 Lloré xq esta carta tooó lo mejor d mi como persona.Y a qué frenteamplista d verdad, puede no tocarle la ilusión d ser y luchar x sus iguales?...Hay algo q quedó en mi tintero y quiero decirlo aunq sé pueda mas q sorprender.Y es la elegancia d Constanza.Físicamente y en sus contenidos odo habla!Vaya qué presidenta ya es, en el querer d tanta gente honesta!!!GRACIAS X ESA CARTA CIUDADANA!</p> <p>Like · Reply · 5 August 2013 at 08:5w</p>	<p>I cried xq [because] this letter touched the best of me as a person. How cannot a frenteamplista be touched by the illusion of fighting and be for their peers? ... There is something left in my inkwell and I want to say even if this surprise you. And this is the elegance of Constanza. Her Appeal and the content of her speech! What a president she already is the eyes and desire of many honest people! THANK YOU X [FOR] THAT LETTER CIUDADANA!</p>	

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/ConstanzaMoreira2014>. Translation conducted by the author.

The demonstration of affects is all over Facebook; and its objectification on public or semi-public networks can be considered as a very important component to understand why people may participate on Facebook. In line with Grosser (2014, p4), affective value can be considered as an essential human need that work as an intrinsic motivator in the relatedness with others and is part of the process of building up esteem and personal worth. It is associated with the possibility personally satisfactory fulfilment in the recognition provided by others. Facebook facilitated and materialized public recognition and affective responses thereby diverse mechanisms such as the above comments and social buttons understood as a form of endorsement (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013).

For Ciudadana, value could not be separated from specific accounts and connections made with a network of users around the topics and content in which she was interested. And, she was very proud about having reached certain numbers of responses with some of her publications that had become a trending topic – a

reference to a previous experience using Twitter. Similarly, she also experienced anxiety about writing post that did not create a reaction in the public or a growing audience. The closure of one of her accounts was sadly regretted by her and considered it as an important loss of time and effort⁸³. On this Personal Profile, she had reached an unusual high number of connections that provided her with moral support and commented and shared her posts as intellectual contribution to a left-wing public.

For Lenina, to be involvement in politics and the 2014 FA campaign related to her interest in pursuing a feminists and left-wing agenda. She participated in several networks of women who advocate for women rights and denounce gender violence. For her, the electoral arena was an important space to fight for women's rights, and Facebook a space to connect with a feminist community and engage with a broader audience to denounce misogynists and attitudes against the respect for equal opportunities to women. As part of an ideological and moral cause in which she has deeply involved, she actively sought for comments and pictures that she considered need to be denounced part of a patriarchalism system that subjugate women.

She understood her actions as part of a civil educational activism to fighting against the pressing topic of gender violence and show people the existing inequalities such as salaries gaps or the relative smaller presence of women in top political positions. For her, the campaign for Moreira was an opportunity to have more women in top positions. In her actions she differentiates between mainstream people who were non-critical of the status quo, and a second group of people who demanded a response to problems such as human rights and the redistribution of wealth associated with progressive and left-wing groups (Lenina, interview, 2014). In her speech, the idea of unconscious machismo was a not a simple detail, but a fundamental concept directly related to what she described as a civic-activism aimed at raising awareness on gender inequality, denounce a naturalised gender violence and fight for women rights.

⁸³ On this account she engaged with other users in strong disputes on topics such as international politics and military occupation. She was infringing Facebook terms by using a pseudonym and her account was banned.

Her participation on Facebook was related to the intellectual and moral capacity to make valuations on what was right and wrong for developing a more open and egalitarian mentality and ideology. And, by exercising valuations on what posts were reproducing more injustice or promoting a fairer society, she positioned herself as a user with the reputation and *ethical capital* to be in front of a community of people who supported and recognised her as someone who with the to judge the value of participation. In 2015, Lenina felt betrayed by Moreira who decided to support Daniel Martinez as the candidature for the local elections in Montevideo. She understood that her party was not supporting a female candidate, and then, not representing her interests anymore. In a series of discussions and fierce arguments, she stopped supporting Casa Grande and left the Facebook pages that supported Moreira.

A final analysis on how the Fan Page Constanza Moreira 2014⁸⁴ became the official campaign page is useful to understand the process of value creation. Moreira already knew that many FA's supporters were disenchanted with Vázquez as the FA's unique presidential candidate. She has also considered the importance and benefits of being an alternative candidate for the party and the supporters (Bianchi, 2013). However, the Fan Page Constanza Moreira 2014 was important in providing her with important evidence about the public support for her name as alternative candidate (Moreira, interview, 2014). After Moreira accepted the formal proposal of being a candidate in the internal elections⁸⁵, her team started thinking in a strategy on Facebook and surveyed the different pages that have been already created to suggest her as presidential candidate (Ana, interview, 2014). The final selection of the page was related to "the number of people that the page already had" (Mariano, interview, 2014) and what Ciudadana and Mariano described as good quality content for creating a message with solid arguments. Similarly, the senator team and voluntary advisors agreed that the Fan Page Constanza 2014 already had a good aesthetic and quality content. They also considered that the page had an editorial line that represented well a message for political renovation aligned with the image of Moreira (Mariano, interview, 2014). Last but not least, the possibility of including Mariano, Ciudadana and other page administrators for the campaign was also considered as

⁸⁴ This page URL is <https://www.facebook.com/ConstanzaMoreira2014>, and despite of its now out of date name, it still was the Senator official Facebook site in the first months of 2018.

⁸⁵ Candidatures had to be supported by an registered political party, and the PVP (Partido para la Victoria del Pueblo) made the official and formal presentation of Moreira

important element to choose this page and add them as high valuable resource voluntarily offered (Carlos, interview, 2014; Moreira, interview, 2014; Ana, interview, 2014).

One of the initiatives to boost Constanza's internal candidature on this page were the posts of personal photos showing public support to her candidature. Each time a user liked the page and posted content on it, other users were informed about this. And, those photos worked as form of public support and recommendation that trigger more participation from new users who could start following the Constanza Moreira 2014 Fan Page.

Figure 10: Collage of images create to support Moreira posted on Constanza Moreira 2014.



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/ConstanzaMoreira2014>

Section 2 – Account Centred Value: *analysing a dynamic of value production in a multivalent medium.*

Value cannot be separated from those frames and interests that inform the valuation process (Dewey, 1939), but an attempt to provide a general conceptualisation on how participation on Facebook creates value is possible by focusing on attention as a universal and limited asset for all kind of practices. This last section suggests the concept of *Account Centred Value* (ACV) to understand a dynamic of value production. This concept is related to what boyd and Ellison's (2008) and Bennett et al. (2014, p233) describe as the

personalisation and self-management accounts according to users' personal criteria. And, it considers three fundamental aspects of Facebook to understand that dynamic: 1) a network of users to satisfy specific goals and needs, 2) the possibility of personalised and self-managed an account, and 3) the affordances to register users' interactions on an account. This concept aims to contribute to the discussions about SNS and value production and is built upon the definitions of boyd and Ellison, *productive publics* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013), *connective action* (Bennett et al., 2014), *attention economy* (Goldhaber, 1997), and the ideas of *objectual valuation* and *multivalence* (Lury and Marres, 2015) on Facebook.

The fundamental idea of this term suggests that value is created in relation to the capacity of an account to gather users' attention and interactions around content and activities proposed by users. The word account refers to the platform's affordances to register interactions around pages managed by users on which a network of users may contribute to add value. Since accounts have a limited access to the attention of users in certain networks and value creation depends on their support, a dynamic of competition and collaboration based on a shared interest may be suggested. This is not dual dynamic, but part of simultaneous interactions that can be linked to multiple orders of worth and lateral forms of valuations (Stark, 2009, p10, p25) in which actors may approach a same space in different manners.

Similarly, value creation does not imply the users' acknowledgment or voluntary consent, but it is related to their interactions with pages, content and others in a network. As mentioned in the epigraph of this chapter, a user may visit a page to criticise the activities of party and contribute to make a page more visible. This may trigger a discussion that may strengthen feeling of solidarity and belonging among members of the attacked party and foster new participation. Facebook may measure an increasing activity around a page and content that may be re-purposed by account managers to show how the content is reaching more people.

This form of understanding value production is useful to describe the interactions of users on public on open spaces that supported a political party, but it does pretend to provide a final definition of Facebook. As it has been considered in the literature review, other concepts such as *Big Data* acknowledge the platform capacity to generate value by harvesting or scraping data generate by users on their interactions recorded online.

Valuable information may not be linked to the ability of one user to propose a topic and gather attention and collaboration from others, but value may be found in the possibility of making queries about data generated by accounts which are not necessarily connected. Facebook may be thought as platform that allows the creation of a valuable database generated by multiple networks. It may be possible to argue that the generation value is still linked to the interests of a user who is able to access that database with a certain query about specific topics and content that cannot be separated from a goal and frame that provide meaning to the data. Data about religious beliefs or ethnicity may become valuable and collected on Facebook if a research agency understand that this information is useful and requested to target specific groups of people with a political message (BBC, 2018; Moore, 2018). The concept *Account Centre Value* does not aim to provide a definition of Facebook, but it approaches value from a user perspective and public participation. For this concept, value creation is based on the notion of valuation as part of an exercise in a specific frame that provides a goal and meaning to actions in relation to a goal within a *productive public* that contributes to add value to an account.

Value cannot be thought in quantitative terms only, but it also needs to be considered in a qualitative form. In line with Grosser (2014), this study observed that Facebook metrics were considered by all type of users who wanted to see responses from others. Professional campaigners considered the quantification of followers and Likes on each post as part of the campaign's targets. Similarly, Ciudadana, Lenina or Mariano were also interested in building and audience and valued the numbers of responses based on personal criteria that depended on their previous experiences with a network of users. But, specific types of interactions such as a post being shared by a famous journalist or scholar (Federico, interviewed, 2014, Mariano, interview, 2014); or a very emotional and supportive comment (Ciudadana, interview, 2014) were highly praised. The valuation of responses gather on one account varied significantly from one case to another and depended on the users' aims, possibilities and expectations in catching the attention of Facebook's massive network of users.

The reasons to participate on Facebook were both personal and related to a group. When the team of Senator Moreira asked Mariano to be part of the official campaign and continue managing the Fan Page,

he felt this as part or public recognition and validation of his capacity to promote political ideas and mobilise people at a national level. As Ciudadana (interview, 2014) said, this provided one with a role inside a bigger and growing group who wanted and were counting with their participation to materialise a political project. The recognition of a person as an influential user was a powerful motivation to Mariano and Ciudadana. This can be linked to the process of building up a reputation and *ethical capital* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013) inside a group that strengthened the user's position and the *collective identity* of the group.

Conclusions

The material presented in this chapter suggests that Facebook provided a multivalence space where different users and interests for interacting with others converged. The recognition of diverse forms of value was not part of a typology or an exhaustive system to classify mutually exclusive practices. Instead, the thesis suggests that actors may be simultaneously involved in various types of activities related to different forms of valuation. Actors were not considered as fixed in specific relationships. They moved across different situations and frames for acting on large and heterogeneous publics that may enter into dynamics of collaboration and competition.

The first section observed the interactions of journalists, publicists and campaign staff and considered the public attention as a valid asset. Facebook was defined by them as a valuable tool to obtain relevant information and catch the attention of the public. The notion of fake news and controversies were mentioned in relation to the value of Facebook for circulating information that could provide journalists with news scoops and followers. And the possibility of qualitative difference in a party's campaign thereby the escalation of information on well-established newspapers and TV channels. Those topics allowed the chapter to consider the valuation of participation in relation to their reputation for posting information that was trustful and able to catch the public attention. This was also linked to the capacity of provide content that was intellectually and emotionally relevant for the public.

Their practices might be framed in what can be described as part of an *attention economy* as a common denominator of all activities that competed for catching the public's interests. However, the interaction with

the public and the value of the attention gathered around the content was subject to different criteria for valuating the users' responses.

The second section described the practices of professional campaigners around the FA National Commission as part of specific logic for acting that involved calculation of efficiency related to campaign targets. As part of this professional logic of action monetary transactions were considered as a requirement for distributing content and reaching the public via paid advertisement. Similarly, their actions were guided and explained by valuations based on calculations that included mechanism for tracking the reaction of the publics and possibilities of gaining their support. Publicist involved in this group of professional campaigners considered Facebook as valuable due to the relative low cost of promoting content via paid advertisement and the content scalability actively created by the public's capacity to promote post in a network of users. The use of indicators and constant evaluation of content and pages in relation to targets can be associated to idea of an *audit culture* (Espeland and Sauder, 2007) that is especially considered in the next chapter to analyse the activities of the National Commission. Those indicators were supported by external consultants who positioned their services as a compass to understand the campaign and aimed to deliver a useful product for the needs of the campaign's team.

The third section showed that the multivalence on Facebook could involve an open competition between a space and the attention of the public. FA supporters understood free advertisement of commercial services on their pages as spam and outside the valid frame for participation on those spaces. This observation also suggested that participation on a same page could be in competition or collaboration depending on the interests and criteria to understanding participation.

The fourth section continued with the idea of competing frames by analysing the reactions to a picture posted on an Open Group. The common understanding of Facebook as an informal space for interacting and its low threshold level for participation allowed users to post content that was considered gross by others. The conflict around the image of a naked man with the face of a political opponent clearly showed two main aspects relevant for this chapter that explored the enactment of *multivalence* on Facebook. The first aspect observed in the reactions around the image was related to the importance of moral and ethical

considerations in the valuation of the participation. The second aspect showed the existence of competing criteria for understanding valuable participation among FA's supporters. This topic – explored in more detail in chapter six – may be partially analysed by considering the notion of *heterarchy* (Stark, 2009, p5) in a group which had a common electoral goal. According to the idea of *heterarchy*, members of the group may have lateral orders of worth to consider how to contribute to the production of value. But, these multiple criteria may also enter in a confrontation regarding incompatible priorities in the materialisation of practices. The observations in the fourth section considered that multiple criteria may not be able to cooperate in enriching value production or provide diverse forms of gaining value. The effort put in to the creation of a set of digital modified images was considered inadequate and harmful for an Open Group and the ethical and moral standards that enforced and justified the decisions of removing the image.

The fifth section described the activities of independent activists who campaigned on Facebook for an alternative presidential candidate. They were gathered on a *productive public* that allowed the concentration of public support for the emergence of a political project around Constanza Moireira and Casa Grande. Members of this group developed a sense of belonging for a group that transmitted enthusiasm about the possibility of a political change. Participation on Facebook was valued in relation to moral and intellectual ideas on content that reinforced the *collective identity* of a left-wing group and help building the reputation and esteem of the members who received the support and validation from other users. In some cases, participation was considered as the fulfilment of a moral position publicly recognised as appropriate. But, in other cases, this recognition assumed specific roles and responsibilities such as the designation of Mariano as the administrator of Moreira's Fan Page.

After showing this multivalence with different examples enacted by various actors, the sixth section suggested the term *Account Centre Value* (ACV) to focus on the link between value production and the importance of personalised account to interact with others and centralise the attention of users around topics and shared interests. The concept did not pretend to replace other conceptualisations or provide a final and comprehensive definition of Facebook, but it may be thought as an analytical effort to bring together the multiple and diverse forms of value into a common and general point that considered the specificities of

productive publics on Facebook. To catch the attention of a public was considered as personal and organisational need that users frame around their own interests and goals. And, valuation based on users' engagement was related to the users' interests and calculation around the idea of progression and contributions towards a goal.

Facebook could be considered as an immense database and a powerful device to show how many people were interested in certain keywords. However, the possibility of measuring the value was related to the possibility of gathering the attention and the contributions from other users on pages on which those users interacted. They personalised these accounts by posting content and deciding what was meaningful and adequate on those spaces. Similarly, Facebook affordances allowed interactions on different scales and publics that may be relevant for a single user interested in chatting about politics with a few peers, or the possibility of paying advertisement to reach users across the country and meet the targets of a national campaign. From the users' perspective, accounts could be defined as ego-centric networks that produced value in relation to the capacity of catching the attention and support from others around specific goals and interests.

Chapter 5 – Audit Culture and the use of metrics in a professional campaign

Epigraph

The phrase ‘I really do not know what is going to happen’ heard at the FA headquarter and meetings shows a mix of uncertainty and anxiety. This uneasiness could be attributed to the mid-September polls, which predicted a complicated political scenario for the FA. The party could lose control of the legislative chambers and the presidential election that have been previously considered as secured victories. Expressions of uncertainty and uneasiness were sometimes followed by a call to party’s followers for making extra efforts to participate and support the campaign under the battlefield slogan ‘Let’s redouble’⁸⁶.

The campaign team at the National Commission for Propaganda and Communication were constantly receiving requests from people asking for materials (leaflets, flags, stickers) with which they might help support the party. Throughout most of the evening, a team of young volunteers were discussing ideas and developing activities for the digital campaign in the offices and aisles of the building’s first floor. The goal was to win the presidential seat and secure a majority in the legislative chambers on the 26 October national election, and the digital team had spent time and resources on Facebook, Twitter and Youtube, where the slogan ‘Let’s redouble’ was also repeatedly mentioned.

The team knew that a new Like on Facebook was not equivalent to a new vote or a valid form of predicting results in the coming elections. But, they saw the clicking of this button as a form of showing support in real-time and were making every possible effort to boost the public’s reaction. The number of Likes on the Facebook’s page had been constantly growing in previous weeks, but the anxiety and uncertainty regarding

⁸⁶ Let’s redouble is a FA battlefield slogan that portrayed a political period of resistance marked by the Uruguayan dictatorship in the 1970s and the basis of a popular lyric which is still used to call FA supporters and the people in general for making an extra effort in the political struggle. The song can be accessed online on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhMXybx7jpQ>. Last accessed on 28 April 2018.

the future election's results did not disappear. The 'Let's redouble' motto was a form of coping with the difficulties in the campaign and moving towards the electoral goal.

In one of the corners of the office, a campaign manager was quietly looking at the latest charts displaying the numbers of Likes reached by the different parties competing in the elections. He had been looking at FA Fan Page every day in the past months and had paid to promote the page, so more people could be reached and engage with the campaign. He also knew that 120,000 Likes reached on the page was not a prediction of what the election results would be, and on its own this number had not even provided him with a certainty about the general directions of the campaign. It was only after he received updated information about the number of Likes reached by the other parties that he was able to take a decision and direction on this specific medium. While Looking at the screen, he calmly said: "So far we have more than the double of Likes. If they narrow the gap to less than 70,000 likes, I will start pumping money on Facebook again".

Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to understand how Facebook's indicators, such as the number of Likes described above, became part of valuation processes that have implications in deciding further actions for the campaign. This opening vignette provides a glimpse of some of the multiple activities carried out by the group of professional campaigners introduced in the previous chapter as part of the FA National Commission. Their practices, conducted in association with other actors in a specific electoral situation, are the main focus of this chapter. They shared the interests and anxieties about gaining public support with other party members, but what differentiates them from other groups was a professional logic that required a systematic approach to collect evidence to make valuations of performances of the campaign to achieve results. Campaign managers incorporated Facebook's affordances to measure the public's responses to try to understand their position in the electoral race. And, in line with one of aspects of an *audit culture* (Espeland and Sauder, 2007), the chapter argues that the metrification of participation was a necessary component for the activities of this group of professional campaigners who required constant audits to conduct their work.

The chapter starts by considering the meaning of metrics provided by research participants and explores how they were included in valuation process to understand the interactions on the FA official Fan Page. As was mentioned in chapter two, this thesis found a literature gap in the study of Facebook and political campaign that left the cultural meaning of social buttons mostly unexplored. The chapter's first section makes a small contribution to filling that gap by providing an ethnographic observation of the users' perspective on these buttons. The quantification of interactions provided by these metrics is then connected to the notion of progress in a professional and audit cultures (Espeland and Sauder, 2007; Grosser, 2014) and analysed as part of what Gerbaudo (2016) describes as *digital enthusiasm* and the capacity of metrics to foster more activity among political groups.

The second section analyses the practices of this group of professionals as part of what is defined as an *audit culture* and a logic of action that required a systematic analysis and devices to assess situations and make decisions. Facebook's indicators were included in evaluations and decisions such as the need for more advertising described in the epigraph. In line with Dewey's (1939), and Boltanski and Thévenot's (1999) theories, valuation process can be thought of as the response to a problematic situation that requires an examination and a solution. This section analyses how the quantification of the public's reaction was used as a *reality test* (Boltanski and Thévenot's, 1999) to make evaluations of the campaign performances as part of an *audit culture* that required ordering and ranking pages for taking decisions. The last part of this section elaborates one of the main arguments of this thesis and analyses how Facebook has contributed to the popularisation of a culture based on constant audits. Here, the thesis suggests that the pervasive use of metrics on this site has provided all types of users with tools to conduct their own forms of valuation in relation to content and accounts' capacity to generate responses from the public. A specific example is analysed to illustrate how metrics were included and influenced evaluations on the importance of content to foster public support.

The third section analyses how metrics were instrumental for justifying and enabling the activities of the National Commission as part of a professional frame for acting in a culture that required auditing. Not only does the chapter argue that metrics have a performative effect on users and influence evaluations and

decision making, but it also considers valuations as part of open process that may be questioned (Boltanski and Thévenot's, 2006), reviewed or ignored. The possibility of conducting valuation is considered as part of a process that needed to be negotiated with different intervening actors. The creation of a consensus around the possibility of metrics as valid devices for conducting valuations is analysed as part of the distributed agency of those actors who contributed in different capacities. And, metrics are analysed here as part of a specific frame that fitted the logics of this professional group campaigning for the FA.

Section 1 – Understanding the public character of metrics for the FA campaign

Campaigners and political consultants questioned on many different occasions the processes by which metrics were calculated and how reliable they were to analyse content reach and public support. One of the perceived problems with Facebook indicators was related to a lack of trust in the possibility of associating them with Uruguayan voters. Daniel (interview, 2014) and Valenti asked themselves “how do I know if my page is being shown to the right people?” (Valenti, interview, 2014), “how do I know if those people who liked the pages are in Uruguay – and will be able to vote – or they are in another part of the world?”. Cristian (interview, 2014), a political consultant and researcher, had evaluated the possibilities of considering the number of followers as an indicator of the influence that a politician could have on public opinion. He understood that this was problematic due to the existence of fake accounts or paid services aimed at creating accounts that were not equivalent to voters. Similarly, the use of Facebook data was seen to have methodological implications related to the lack of a sampling frame that could be used with other methodologies (Walter, interview, 2014). Facebook metrics were also questioned in relation to a lack of transparency, the unknown effects of paid advertisements and speculations on the possibility of skewing indicators with digital skills (Cristian, interview, 2014; Daniel, interview, 2014). As Langlois et al. (2009) observed, the methods of calculating involved in the use of metrics such as the number of content visualisations or user engagement provided on Facebook Insight Pages were not accessible to users and part of platform close back-end operations that did not allow any type of scrutiny.

However, campaigners considered metrics as necessary tools for understanding the reach and results of campaigning on Facebook. And, despite the lack of clarity and caveats on how content was being shown to users and how metrics might have been manipulated, the metrification of interactions was actually seen as part of a standardised computational process that could be used by all campaigners to provide common indicators of public support and users' interactions with Facebook pages (Cristian, interview, 2014; Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Martin, interview, 2014; Silvana, interview, 2014). They became necessary devices on which managers relied to monitor the progress made on the campaign carried on this specific medium.

When campaigners were asked about the use of the Like Button they mentioned diverse possible meanings for it, but, in line with the Facebook's official definition (see the second section of the first chapter), they mostly considered the button as an affirmative stamp that publicly communicated the user's positive engagement with specific content and specific page. They believed it was mostly used to show happiness or enthusiasm that could be generated by good news, the picture of a friend portrayed while campaigning for the party or the image of beloved leaders such as Pepe Mujica or Serengui (Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014). But, clicking the Like Button was thought by some users as a rational decision to show support to the FA associated with the public character of metrics and the possibility of using the counter as form of displaying to others the support gathered by their pages. "We could spend 10 hours discussing if the sentiment of a comment was positive or negative and how to measure this, but the numbers were objective, and we believe in the quantitative as the basis on which we could discuss and agree with everyone whether a post had worked well or not" (Federico, interview, 2014).

Campaigners also knew that some users might have simply clicked the button, because they understood that it was important to show support without necessarily agreeing with the post or finding it interesting (Joaquin, interview, 2014; Max, interview, 2014). In other cases, the use of the Like button was a form of flagging content and showing others that a post was relevant even if the user did not actually support the ideas expressed by the post. Max explained this by saying "I like it that people participate and to support people, I try put a Like to everything even if I don't agree with much with it. But, I put Like to show that it's

good that they are having a voice and opinion" (Max, interview, 2014). "There are people who put Like to everything as a way of supporting fellow supporters" (Jimena, interview, 2014). Similarly, Paula (interview, 2014), as a page administrator, sometimes liked the comments left by supporters as a way to encourage their participation and let them know that they were being listened to by their own party.

Other users, campaigning for the FA, clearly stated that they would have never clicked the Like Button on content with which they did not agree one hundred percent or was communicating bad news (Ciudadana, interview, 2014; María, interview, 2014; Jimena, interview, 2014). They said that a negative button to show dislike was needed on Facebook⁸⁷ (Mariano, interview, 2014; Ciudadana, interview, 2014; María, interview, 2014). They felt the need for some expression other than Like especially strongly when the National Commission communicated the cancellation of a rally in a small town to respect the public mourning of a girl recently killed. Instead of clicking the Like button, many users wrote comments below the post on the Fan Page to show empathy and a sense of uneasiness with the news. Similarly, some users did not use this button on a post denouncing the links between Bordaberry⁸⁸ and the dictatorship, but they shared the post because they felt that this information needed to be circulated and spread (Edna, interview, 2014; Ciudadana, interview, 2014).

The Share Button implied a different kind of interaction that was highly praised by the campaign team for two main reasons. The first was connected to the idea of developing a viral campaign with the users' help to reach a larger audience (Ciudadana, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014). This could be achieved by getting a large number of users to republish content on other pages via the Share Button or with the help of famous journalists, large media outlets who might share and distribute content from very popular pages. "Content can be made viral and at that moment the press picks it up. That is the goal" (Jorge, interview, 2014). The second reason to consider this button as especially valuable was related to the association of it with a stronger and different kind of involvement. Campaigners understood the action of sharing as a sign of users' bigger commitment in making a personal association with the content created by others. The Like

⁸⁷ It is relevant to mention that this research took place before Facebook globally introduced a new kind of buttons called 'reactions'. The love, angry, sad and laughing out loudly were introduced late in 2015.

⁸⁸ Bordaberry was a politician already mentioned in the first section of chapter one.

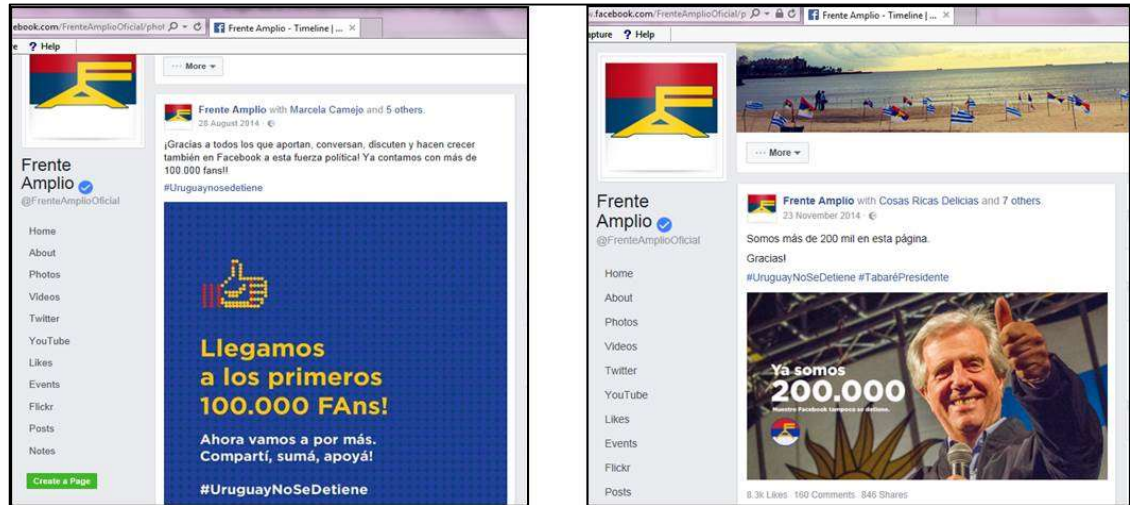
Button could be used to show agreement or simply to acknowledge a valid form of participation made by others. But, the Share Button involved the users' personal endorsement that required using an account and showed an alignment of his or her profile with the message created by others (Daniel, interview, 2014; Paula, interview, 2014).

The Like and the Share buttons were mostly considered as forms of public support in two main aspects. The first one was related to its visibility, a way in which a public was understood to be observable by others. This implied a visible link and support or endorsement from one user's account to another account and its content. The second aspect was associated with the action of being part of a group of users who added up to the metrification of support to the goal or proposal suggested by a page.

Before 2014 no political association or politician in Uruguay had been able to reach a 100,000 Likes on a Facebook Page. Gabriel, the director of large governmental organisation, advisor of the presidential campaign and passionate football fan, knew that in Uruguay only international football stars such as Luis Suarez or Diego Forland were able to obtain more than a million Likes. Similarly, only the most successful national organisations such as Antel⁸⁹, the Uruguayan Football Association or the biggest football teams (Peñarol and Nacional) were able to reach more than half million Likes. Facebook was considered to be a massive medium and the counting of Likes generated by clicking buttons could be corroborated by the public support shown in the interactions with others in their everyday lives. So, when the FA Fan Page reached a hundred thousand Likes, it was acclaimed as a milestone in the campaign and a mark of success to be associated with public approval.

⁸⁹ Antel was the Uruguayan public telecommunications company that successfully competed with international companies.

Figure 11: Images of the posts celebrating the first 100,000 and the 200,000 users who liked the Official Fan Page.



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/Frente-AmplioOficial>

As the above post suggests, for campaigners, it was very important to have growing support from the public on their pages. The image on the left read “We reach the first 100,000 FAns⁹⁰. Now we go for more. Share, add, support”. To reach a round number with several digits was celebrated by campaigners who also knew and were proud of having more Likes than the other parties. This number could be publicly recognised as a tangible sign of users’ active involvement and as part of a collective effort achieved by a political community. The campaign team gave thanks to all of those who were making the page stronger by participating on it. Similarly, the reach of the 200,000 fans was another opportunity to reinforce the idea of progress achieved by *productive public* campaigning to gain more supporters.

For the National Commission and supporters, these indicators became what Boltanski and Thévenot (1999) define as *reality tests*. By simplifying users’ multiple individualities into a single homogenous quantification, metrics provide the evidence on which valuations could be conducted (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p44, p128) according to the size of reactions and support reached. Politicians campaigners could have doubts about the meaning of these indicators for their electoral goals (Gabriel, interview, 2014; Mieres, interview, 2014; Moreira, interview, 2014), but the number of fans publicly displayed on pages was generally recognised as an indicator of support and included in a process that allowed the networks of users to be

⁹⁰ The capitalization of the two first letters of the word fans makes a reference to the party’s acronym (FA).

claimed as part of the campaign results. As mentioned above by Federico, the National Commission “could discuss and agree with everyone” (interview, 2014) the result of campaign activities based on a quantification that helped to translate and transform the public participation into a common indicator to conduct a valuation. The growing numbers were created and provided by Facebook, and the campaign team could consider them as evidence of a *reality test* to legitimate the valuation of those activities carried out to obtain people’s support.

Users’ comments left below the posts mentioning the reach of the 100,000 and the 200,000 fans also showed that many users considered this fast-growing number as a sign of progress in the campaign. The larger the number of fans on Facebook the greater the support was described to be. The National Commission used this idea in the post published on 23 November 2014: “We are already more than 200,000. Our Facebook also does not stop”. They aimed to spread *digital enthusiasm* (Gerbaudo, 2016) based on the performative capacity of the metric to associate moving numbers with a notion of progress.

Metrics may have not been easily translated into votes or read as an electoral thermometer, but they were used to conduct self-appraisal messages that helped motivate party supporters to continue campaigning (Gerbaudo, 2016, p257) and build-up self-confidence in their capacity to achieve a collective proposal. By flattening internal conflicts and divisions into a common indicator of support, the Like Button also facilitated the reading and establishment of the FA as a *collective identity* that unified various political perspectives and re-signified public endorsement in one political front. The notion of progress triggered by the growing number of fans generated a dynamic of self-reinforcing loops (Gerbaudo, 2016, p258) associated with the reading of measures as an objectification of growing public support. As a result, the numbers of Likes and Shares was seen as a trigger of more support and encouraging more comments (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013; Grosser, 2014, p9). To increase these numbers was actively sought by the campaign team as a way to reach better results in the campaign. They associated these indicators with the constant race in the campaign that gave them “extra adrenaline (...) you want to know how much you can get, what else can you answer, how many more re-tweets you have, how many Likes, how many more Shares” (Paula, interview, 2014).

Figure 12: User's comments on the posts to celebrate the 200,000 fans on the FA Official Fan Page.

User	Original Comment (Spanish)	Translation (English)
User 1	ya somos 200.000 q increíble pasa el tiempo y cada vez somos mas ! vamo aguante el frente+	"we are already 200,000 it is incredible that the time passes and we are always more! Come on and hold on el frente+"
User 2	a partir de hoy nos multiplicaremos como hongos después de la lluvia 3FA ❤️	"as of today we will multiply like mushrooms after the rain 3FA [third FA government] ❤️"
User 3	Por masss	"for more"
User 4	festejen por mi, que no puedo ir, arriba el Frente Amplio	"celebrate for me, that I can't go, Come on Frente Amplio"
User 5	Ya tenemos un nuevo presidentr Tabaré Tabaré!!!!!!	"We already have a new president Tabaré Tabaré!!!!!!"
User 6	vamos arriba Tabare Sendic el FRENTE AMPLIO	"Come on Tabare Sendic el FRENTE AMPLIO"
User 7	Me sumo al festejo xque ganamos lejos el domingo arriba tabare	"I join the celebration because we win for sure on Sunday come on tabare"
User 8	el 30 URUGUAY NO SE DETIENE.....	"On the 30 URUGUAY DOES NOT STOP....."
User 9	Somos mucho Más que ésto!!!!!!!!!!!! Ariba el FA	"We are much More than this!!!!!!!!!!!! Como on the FA"
User 10	200.001.....	"200.001....."
User 11	¡ Y YO SOY LA 200.001	"AND I AM THE [FEMALE] 200.001"
User 12	Y sigamos por más gente!!!	"And let's go for more people!!!"

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/Frente-AmplioOficial>. Translation conducted by the author.

Section 2 – Making valuations and decisions possible in an *audit culture*.

Fan Pages facilitated the creation of tailored communication strategies and the self-management of accounts by providing administrators with a dashboard called Insight Page offering databases and indicators with which they could observe and analyse the public's reactions to content posted on Walls. The FA managers mostly paid attention to general information about the public in terms of a division between users who were already fans of the page and non-fan as well as those who were reached through paid promotion or by unpaid content circulation. By using pre-coded indicators, campaigners could observe the impact and support generated from their accounts and focus on specific posts, which had more responses and fostered

more participation. Similarly, these pages offered the possibility of comparing the metrics of the user's own page with other pages belonging to peers – such as the FA Maldonado or the FA Paysandú pages, two important localities of Uruguay, or competitors such the National Party or the Fan Page of the Red Coloured Party.

Some parties received reports created by external political marketing agencies that repurposed those metrics in relation to the interests of the campaign team. The creation of these reports involved following the public reactions on a weekly basis and were provided by local agencies with experience in public affairs that manually collected some of the data and also used the automatized services of well-established international digital companies such as Social Baker to generate reports. They ordered pages and content in relation to the number of fans, Shares, Likes and content visualisations using specific time frames and charts that allowed tracking internal progress and comparative analysis with other pages. Here, the Like and the Share buttons were seen as a standardised and common form of measuring the users' support and the parties' capacity to capture the public interest. They provided a general equivalent required to make comparisons and calculation (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013; Callon et al, 2002; Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013) among different actors competing for attention and public support. Federico described his use of the external reports and analysis based on the possibility of using metrics to make comparative exercises among pages and content. He identified differences and hierarchies related to the popularity of the pages and their performances with the public by looking at:

“the variations in the number of followers by making simple calculations to see how much they had varied from one week to another. Not only in the Frente Amplio, but also the opposition's main accounts, Lacalle Pou (...) To see what was working for him. And then, we used to make a list of the our most seen publications and their publications. The reports give us a vision of what to publish, where to target the contents” (Federico, interview, 2014).

The number of fans and Likes on content were considered indicators of popularity that worked as a common equivalence among pages and contents, and the possibility of selecting specific pages and data on certain pages and content helped to build a sense of ownership on the page and provided a frame for conducting meaningful valuations based on *Account Centred Value* (ACV) dynamics. They helped to think of a strategy

to communicate with the public and facilitated the valuation of content performances on specific accounts. In the everyday activities of the National Commission, metrics were considered in diverse ways and included in different valuation processes. The various parties composing the FA analysed metrics differently, but they all considered them as analytical devices to understand and explain the impact of their activities on Facebook. For this group of professional campaigners, indicators became fundamental tools to understand if the campaign was going in the right direction, and to re-think their actions to work out “a strategy for achieving a higher impact. We looked at the times of the day when a publication could be more effective” (Federico, interview, 2014). And they considered Facebook’s constant advertisement offers as a need, or as a superfluous expense based the figures and rankings provided by these reports.

From a pragmatic point of view, metrics were required as *intermediaries* (Callon et al., 2002) that translated users’ activity into a uniform indicator that could be used by campaigners as indicators of the public’s interest and included in valuations of the value of posts to generate responses. These indicators and charts objectified pages and contents and positioned the FA in relation to previous points in time and other parties enabling decisions to be made on the course of the campaign. The team compared these indicators on different pages and decided which posts performed well and which did not (Federico, interview, 2014). The notion of a good performance was developed as a result of following the metrics of several accounts. They scored user’s reactions and allowed the inclusion of posts in specific analytical frames that suggested levels of popularity of specific issues and the support obtained by the different accounts. The announcement of the creation of a pension for artists on the official FA page generated an unexpectedly high number of Likes and allowed campaigners to discover the importance of this issue for the *public* on the Fan Page (Daniel, interview, 2014). Similarly, the series of images and statements created after the acrobatic performance made by the National Party candidate on the street were also considered as a good practice and success content that became viral. These series of posts, analysed in chapter six, were fostered and promoted by online managers from the Socialist Party and were reused and shared by many users, who also created memes with the image of Lacalle Pou performing this acrobatic posture. These images caught the attention of TV channels who mentioned the incident and showed the images in some programmes. The series of

responses and topics were highly ranked in the reports and campaigners proudly commented on it as a good initiative.

Managers also looked at these indicators to consider the development of their accounts and self-assess their own practices (Ciudadana, interview, 2014; Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Nicolas, interview, 2014). Campaign managers were responsible for taking decisions and showing their control of the administration of FA pages. And, the data provided by indicators became useful in relation to a specific context and temporal reference included in their reports. Not only did they look at these metrics to monitor the public's reactions, but they also used them to present the results of their activities to generate more public support. And, these indicators became part of self-reflexive exercises on their capacity to motivate and generate responses from the public. Managers at the National Commission tried to identify undesirable comments posts including insults or provocations from political opponents aimed at creating internal tensions (Paula, interview, 2014). Their role was to generate the conditions for spreading a message which could mobilise supporters and gain voters. They demanded resources such as funding for advertisements, help for professional staff to create good quality content and asked supporters to disseminate the posts. But, the decisions as to what good content was and what results could be satisfactory for the campaign required a valuation of the campaign performance. To support these decisions, they required the indicators and reports created by external agencies to be used as *reality tests* (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1999) with which they could objectified the campaign results and justify their actions and decisions in front of the rest of the party.

To understand why these reports were needed, it is useful to revisit Dewey's (1939, p34) conceptualisation of valuation as an exercise initiated as a response to a problematic situation that requires a solution or decision. The national elections required multiple actions to gain public support and votes, and the National Commission was troubled with finding the best way in which they could gain the public attention. For this team, delivering a good campaign was related to its capacity of reaching the public with appealing messages. And, they needed to be able to evaluate their own ability to campaign effectively and show other party's members that the actions taken to obtain public support were useful for the campaign. The reports

on Facebook pages may be thought of as a system and logic required to value the activities on Facebook pages and decide the party's position in relation to public support and the competition.

The metrics included in the reports worked as *reality tests* on the public participation generated on the Fan Page that helped campaign managers to justify their actions with a rationality and evidence for supporting decisions. The measurement of different political parties and use of predefined Facebook buttons and types interactions became relevant as part of the reports' framework which considered two main axes of analysis: a) across time, in relation to a previous point in time - showing 'a good or lack of progress', and b) in relation to the opponent's positions and competing for being in a better place than the others. These two approaches were combined in an obvious third point of analysis that show the constant moving nature of the campaign and the need of c) Looking at how "us and them" were moving across time. The reports created a framework for the analysis of the political scenario in which numbers became meaningful as part of an ACV dynamic based on rankings made out of the metrification of user participation and support to pages that were relevant for a specific account.

Valuation processes did not end in the production of a report but worked as temporary mechanisms to settle tensions and relieve anxieties regarding the party and the National Commission's ability to obtain support from the public and occupy a relatively good position. Following Dewey's (1939, p14-5) conceptualisation of valuation as moving processes, the campaign team understood that content on Facebook was non-static but being constantly created and changed. As a result, the measuring and valuation of content were thought of as open and constant activities that required a continuous monitoring. Potential harmful content could be posted by other parties or fake accounts be used to spread false rumours.

These interactions around the use of metrics at the National Commission may be understood as part of an *audit culture* embodied by professional campaigners and considered as an extension of the rational bureaucracy in modern western societies that require valuation to justify actions (Espeland and Sauder, 2007, p4). The metrification of the public's participation was fundamental to decision-making based on the possibility of collecting data to assess situations and plan actions. Metrics may be associated with the rise of a culture that considers metrics as necessary tools for making valuations and decisions in every aspect

of social life. Espeland and Sauder (2007) describe rankings and ratings as part of an *audit culture* that generates orders and classifications based on those indicators. Similarly, the activities of external consultants and the National Commission was part of a professional frame that fits well what Boltanski and Thévenot describe as a way of ordering worth in an environment “upheld by way of organizational devices directed towards future planning and investment” (1999, p372). The National Commission was involved in rational evaluations based on Facebook indicators to recognise the types of contents and formats (videos, pictures, short comments and long letters) that could create a higher public engagement. In this process, external political consultants were assessed as important partners (Federico, interview, 2014; Paula, interview, 2014; Daniel, interview, 2014) in provision of *reality tests* for making valuations based on those reports and indicators. They may be understood as part of a professional culture that requires auditing public’s reactions to establish a frame for acting in the campaigning.

Similarly, the conceptualisation of the actions conducted by this group of campaigners as a form of *audit culture* allows an exploration of how they were entangled with those metrics in a process of reflexivity that is illustrated in the third section. Not only campaigners, but also the public, party leaders, and external political consultants used the metrics for valuing posts and pages, and took decisions based on them. Facebook’s metrics had a performative effect in making visible specific types of users’ reactions, mostly associated with the quantification of public support (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013), that otherwise would remain invisible and impracticable for them.

Facebook was understood as a useful and necessary medium partly because it was rooted in the users’ recognition of the platform as a massive space for interacting with others on an everyday basis. Their constant participation and regular use of social buttons contributed to normalising and naturalising the platform as a means of reaching a public and measuring their reactions. Facebook without a massive public would have had little or other type of value for the interests of campaigners working at a national election.

But, this thesis suggests that the validation of this metrics as useful devices was the result of socio-technical affordance in which the multiple agencies were required to enable a frame for understanding and justifying the activities on Facebook. Metrics standardised the public reactions and aggregated them into indicators

which were available for monitoring public and facilitated a valuation of public support. But, this chapter has also shown that party members also questioned how these metrics were being calculated and how reliable and relevant were for the campaign. The possibility of using the platform and its metrics in a professional campaign required the analysis of external consultants who created reports that validated and enabled valuation processes on which the party officers could rely and use to justify their activities.

Politicians understood that Facebook was an important medium for the campaign and knew that expert communicators and online managers had the right skills to work on digital content (Moreira, interview, 2014) with video editing or graphic design tools or other techniques such as Search Engine Optimisation techniques to enhance and monitor the circulation of content (Federica, interview, 2014). Similarly, party leaders recognised that campaigning in SNS was a time-consuming task that was better handled by professional officers and online managers (Mariela, interview, 2014; Mieres, interview, 2014; Moreira, interview, 2014).

But, online managers still had to show party leaders and fellow members that they were doing their job to make progress on the campaign. They used Facebook metrics as necessary tools to audit activities, and the reports worked as *reality test* needed by campaigners to observe of their performances and justify their own practices. External consultants and internal advisors contributed to the auditing by providing what was described as an impartial analysis of those indicators that could be used to make valuations of the campaign (Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Mariela, interview, 2014; Paula, interview, 2014). They were presented as experts in the field of political communication and offered a service that helped the National Commission team to track the campaign on Facebook and make sense of public participation. The reports and analytical tools travelled from consultants to the online managers and were disseminated and used in internal meetings with the rest of the campaign team as well as with party leaders and candidates. The recognition of value was the result of moving process which required a constant enactment of *reality tests* and frames for understanding actions that could be seen in competition inside the National Commission. The reports helped to generate a consensus and a shared frame for understanding and analysing the campaign, but different criteria were employed to decide what was valuable and needed to be

posted on the Fan Page were at stake and these did not always comply with the proposals to maximise the campaign's efficiency suggested by campaigners such as Federico or Daniel.

During the campaign, Mónica Xavier, the FA's president elected in 2012, was writing articles which were published on the FA website⁹¹ and republished by the campaign team on the Facebook Fan Page on a weekly basis. Some members of the campaign team looked at these articles and considered that they were not very appealing to the audience and were not working well to foster responses from the public (Daniel, interview, 2014, Paula, interview, 2014). Their explanations for this poor performance were related to the length, language and style that they considered to be inappropriate for a Facebook page. The campaign team was not capable of telling their boss that the articles were boring, but they could show her the reports and make a comparison with the most successful posts in terms of content reach and the numbers of Likes and Shares. In the fourth week of October, the most successful post was able to generate 6,684 Likes and 2,197 Shares, but Xavier's article in the same week only generated 2,257 Likes and 835 Shares. Similarly, in the relatively quiet week of the 12 August 2014, Xavier's article generated a considerable fewer number of Likes (1,397) and Shares (486) than the most popular post, which had 2,494 Likes; and more than double the number of Shares (1,159).

Professional campaigners would have used these indicators to inform their decision as to what content was more effective in terms of eliciting a positive public reaction (Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014), but Xavier was given complete freedom to publish her weekly articles on the Fan Page. An article could have been very well written, but it might not help to generate the type of support achieved by other posts that used a simpler or more enthusiastic message such as the images about the growing number of fans described in the first section of this chapter. The use of Facebook metrics to indicate the efficiency and suitability of content for the campaign was voided by other criteria, which did not respond to a valuation processes based on use of Facebook indicators. The president of the FA was a democratically elected

⁹¹ <http://www.frenteamplo.org.uy/>

leader and was considered as authority that required to be heard as a top representative and spokeswoman of the party.

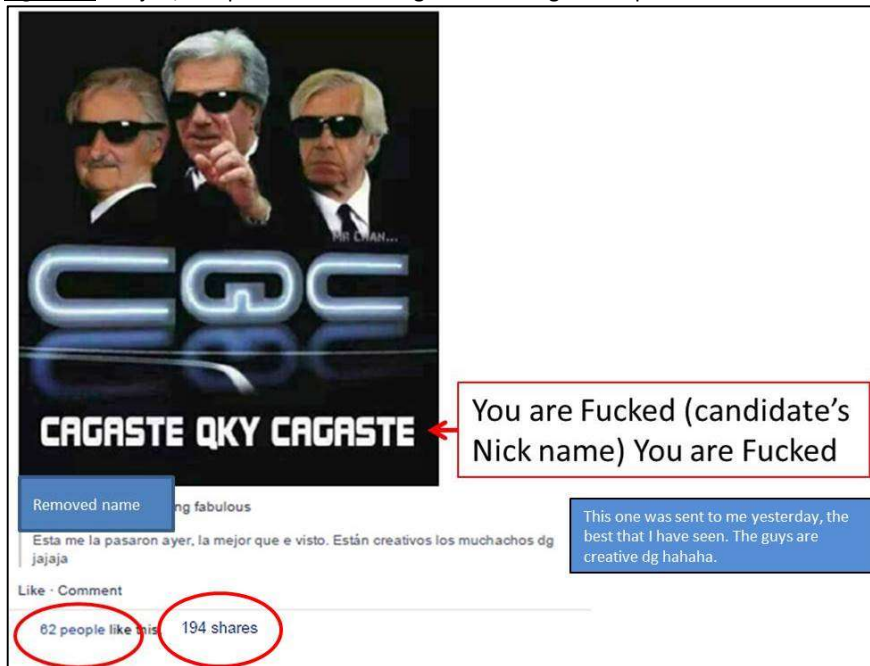
Section 2.1 – The popularisation of *audit culture*.

Facebook was part of people's everyday life, and it can be argued that it expanded the *audit culture* to another level. This later term allows the thesis to think of the constant measurement of interactions as the means to facilitate a proliferation and naturalisation of valuation process on content and pages. Comparisons and valuations exercises were beyond the use of written reports and also conducted informally in a non-structured fashion by users on their constant interactions on the platform. To illustrate the expansion of the culture of auditing, this chapter's subsection considers the interactions around an image posted on the Open Group 'Frente Amplio, Uruguay'⁹². This Group was not part of the professional activities of the party, but the result of an independent initiative of supporters who had developed a loose form of connection and participation on this page. The posted image showed three of the most prominent FA leaders – José Mujica, Tabaré Vázquez and Daniel Astori – within an arrangement and frame that enabled a clear analogy with the three presenters of popular a TV programme called CQC⁹³. The presenters were recognised by their successful TV careers and critical views towards the status quo that involved the denouncement of public issues with an irreverent sense of humour. The image of the acronym may have been copied from one of the programmes adverts or it was replicated in a way that any person who knew the programme would have easily recognised as taken out of its original context and played in a humour key with the similarities between the face's features of the presenters and the politicians. The name of the programme CQC was re-signified to become "Cagaste Qky Cagaste" to indicate a National Party candidate in disgrace in front of the charismatic FA candidates. Here, Qky made a direct reference to Lacalle Pou's nick name and cagaste could be translated as you are screwed or fucked.

⁹² This group is described with detail in the next chapter.

⁹³ CQC is an acronym that stands for *Caiga Quien Caiga*. This may be translated as *Whoever May Fall* and it played with the idea of implacable investigators wearing FBI stereotypical cloths who were committed to conduct research on public issues without mattering who might be hurt in the processes of it.

Figure 13: Mujica, Vázquez and Astori images resembling the TV presenters of CQC.



Source: www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/. Translation conducted by the author.

The post was also seen Jimena, one of the Group's administrators, who did not like the insult and would have liked to remove it. However, she looked at the metrics and commented on it "this worked well. I know there are some people who steamed out their anger with this. So, I cannot remove it (...) You also need to have a little of common sense. People liked this" (Jimena, interview, 2014). The image had been shared 194 times, liked 62 times and commented 87 times. These numbers were above the average public responses regularly found on this Group and they were considered by Jimena to praise the post as relevant to maintain the enthusiasm of some of the group's members by using a type of humour that she did not share.

The measurement of reactions created a form of auditing that Grosser (2014, p7) calls *graphopticon* and was related to the users' capacity to observe and value the posts and users' interventions in quantitative terms. Jimena considered those metrics to make a quick mental valuation on the post and decided that it was in line with the feeling of many supporters and reconsidered her initial idea of deleting it.

"I see how many Likes it has, and I say: if I remove, they kill me. You also have to look at that. I try to prevent them from posting any little balloon [vignettes used in

memes where insults were common] and nonsense. The Likes are a thermometer. I cannot ignore that eighty guys commented and liked it" (Jimena, interview, 2014).

To remove this post could have been seen as a threat to aim of gathering users and maintain the open and popular character of this Group in the context of an electoral competition. This issue was also related to the public displayed a metrics that provided evidence of certain level of popularity and public agreement regarding the relevance of this message. The image had been shared and liked by many members and its capacity to entertain supporters and generate a positive response associated with the FA leaders was considered more important than the lack of ethical values connected with the insult to Lacalle Pou.

This metrification had a performative capacity and created qualitative differences in the participation triggered by the valuation based on the public's responses and the goal of gathering support on this Facebook page. For some Group's administrators such as Jimena or Maria, metrics help to readjust their ideas on what valid and relevant contribution was. Jimena explained that for her it was easier to understand and work with the criteria of party committees, street rallies or face to face discussions, but the type of participation on Facebook was subjected to a different views and forms of participation. The aim of increasing the numbers of users and strengthening the group had to be negotiated with different subjectivities. She was told by other administrators to be a little more permissive with the people's interventions and consider that others may have different views on what was a valid form of participation (Jimena, interview, 2014). The decision to allow swearwords in the group based on their capacity to elicit positive responses was objectified in Likes, Shares and Comments, but it still was part of a political decision of administrators that in this case had been prioritised over ethical criteria.

Not only did large organisations have access to tools to measure the public based on their own interest, but individuals could also conduct their own forms of valuation on objects and events. These valuations were based on the public display of metrics on the interactions with content on any Facebook page and the people's capacity to make calculations in relation to their own interests and the recognition of public support as valuable. By objectifying the capacity to generate responses on the public, Facebook brought a *popularisation of the audit culture* facilitated by metrics as crucial components of *Account Centred Value*

(ACV) dynamic. This metrification associated to accounts allowed users to connect value to their interests and goals with personalisation of a frame to decide what content and interactions were valuable. This extended the possibility of auditing and following accounts as part of everyday interactions and available to all kind of people and issues.

In this *popular audit culture*, it is possible to argue that Facebook's affordance for measuring interactions allowed a dislocation in the agency of measuring and make valuation on the public. In line with Grosser (2014, p7) description of Facebook's metrics, this dislocation in auditing capacities can be observed in the universal public display of metrics on pages and content. They do not require conducting specific studies carried out by pollster and social researchers and are provided by the default setting of those public pages. Users may consider metrics in relation to their own experiences, and this dislocation is related to capacities of everyone to relocate these indicators everywhere in relation to self-referential systems that simplifies value in relation to the number of connection and reactions made with a public on specific accounts.

The popularisation of and *audit culture* was not only developed in relation to the possibility of helping the FA to win the elections, but it was also related to the capacity of being personally recognised as a contributor in the process of building up a stronger group and *collective identity*. Participation on these political pages was also related to the desire of developing and social and *ethical capital*, and as part of a human need of esteem and relatedness. The participations of users like Ciudadana or Mariano (see the fifth section of chapter four) could be seen as form of self-presentation and micro-campaigning. Similarly, online indicators also fostered needs and desires among Facebook users (Grosser, 2014). The numbers of followers and friends who commented and liked a post was seen as an indicator as the personal ability to generate public support to a cause. And, their participations on these pages may have also been associated to a desire for achieving greater reputation related to that ability to generate a reaction in the public.

Section 3 – Metrics’ performativity and multiple agencies in professional practices.

Users were constantly exposed to Facebook metrics that they could consider to make decisions on their involvement in the campaign and interactions with others. In the practises of the National Commission, these metrics were not taken directly from the platform, but they were also included in campaign reports that worked as *mediators* (Callon, 1990; Callon et al., 2002) between the *productive public* on Facebook and the parties’ electoral aims and help to create a valid frame for valuations that was negotiated with other members of the party. Not only were metrics included in making decision about paying for advertisement based on the number of responses, But, metrics also interactions such as the selection of a Fan Page or Groups was sometimes based on the numbers of fans and members (Arturo, interview, 2014; Ciudadana, interview, 2014; Jorge, interview, 2014; Maria, interview, 2014; Pablo, interview, 2014). As it was described in chapter four, users may have chosen popular pages because of the higher chances of gaining the attention of more people. But, they also considered these numbers as sign of their importance for a specific public and as proof of their authenticity confirmed by presence and endorsement of a large number of users (Mariano, interview, 2014; Ciudadana, interview, 2014). Similarly, administrators such as Jimena (interview, 2014) considered the numbers of Facebook Friends already made by a user before accepting or rejecting the request to the join the Group ‘Frente Amplio, Uruguay’. She associated accounts connected with very few users with the possibility of facing a troll only created to make problems on the Group.

The users’ interactions with metrics may be understood as a form of *reactivity* (Campbell, 1957, p298) in which an object being measured is modified as a result of the same operation of measuring its attributes. The measurement generated by social buttons also provided contents and pages with a specific treatment that blurred the distinction between the act of observing and transforming the same observed object. “Measures elicit responses from people who intervene in the objects they measure” (Espeland and Sauder, 2007, p2), and they led to *reactivity* that informed and triggered further actions. These metrics were

understood as positive reactions and engagement (Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013) that could be associated with content and pages capacity to generate responses in the public (Grosser, 2014). An account unable to generate any kind of response was considered as suspicious, unpopular and disregarded as a useful space for campaigning.

Similarly, Facebook and its metrics had a performative character that allow users to visualise the public and objectified the interest on a page and certain issues materialised in content posted on Wall. Not only did indicators showed users' responses to page or content, but they also translated, aggregated and synthesised the activity of diverse users into a number which became the representation of the public (Beer, 2016; Bessy and Chauvin, 2013; Espeland and Sauder, 2007) that could be easily included in valuation processes. Facebook metrics may be thought mediators that did not only pass information from one actor to another, but they also perform activities which modify the terms and situations of the intervening actors.

The performative character of metrics also needs to be understood in relation to the capacity of users to include them into a frame for valuation that was facilitated in what can be described as an *audit culture*. The metrics also validated and were shared as a “cognitive scheme that organize the valuation experience” (Bessy and Chauvin, 2013, p97). The reports and metrics only worked as valid frame of action when the different members of party accepted them as a commonly shared device to understand campaign performances. The intervention of professional consultants and the creation of a systematic analysis presented in the reports helped dissipate the ambiguity around Facebook's indicators, but metrics needed to be circulated, understood and validate by the actors who participate in the campaign. Party leaders such as Mónica Xavier or Constanza Moreira also had an agency in deciding the campaign strategy and the circulation of content (Ana, interview, 2014; Daniel, interview, 2014; Moreira, interview, 2014; Paula, interview 2014), and they published articles that were hardly questioned by party officers.

Section 3.1 – Building a public to excel in an audit culture

The National Commission team was not naïve or passive regarding the performative capacity of the metrics and actively sought to work with their agency to objectify public support. As it has previously suggested, the

use of metrics and reports may be understood as part of specific logic for action that was in line with the views and interest of this team. Facebook was considered a means for campaigning and building a growing public to support the party (Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Gabriel, interview, 2014; Mariela, interview, 2014; Paula, interview, 2014). Not only were these indicators instrumentals to monitor the public reactions and support, but they also had a performative role in showing the campaign's performance and justify the practices of this group of professional. They aimed at showing and increasing activity and public support in relation to a previous situation and the competition thereby paid advertisement, asking party members to re-circulate content pages to modify and try to increase the numbers displayed by those indicators. In line with Grosser (2014, p2), Facebook's metrics were understood as part of an *audit culture* that recognise quantification as a valid and objective method that simplified the public reactions into a single number with which the idea of progress could be displayed as part of an industrial frame of valuation (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006). Metrics could be shared with party's member and the public who, based on their own experience on Facebook, could easily understand them as a quantification of a growing support that generate enthusiasm and evidence of public interest in the campaign.

To consider metrics as part of the definition of Account Centred Value (ACV) dynamic (see the last section of chapter four) is relevant to observe the influence of Facebook's indicators in a process that encourages the creation of asymmetries in the capacities of gathering public support around an account. The idea of asymmetries in the popularity of candidates is already included in the notion of an electoral race in which participants compete and aim to defeat other parties (Scammell, 2014). Social buttons may be understood as common equivalent to measure campaign performance in relation to the possibility of attracting users and Facebook was thought as an open and free medium, where everyone had the same opportunities to participate (Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Gabriel, interview, 2014; Nicolas, interview, 2014). This allowed campaigners to conduct comparative exercise based on the idea of the users' equal capacity to show their support for parties.

However, the capacity of gathering a public around an account was not the direct result of users' independent and free agency to interact with parties' pages, but it was mediated by Facebook policy of

content distribution. Facebook managed and controlled the circulation of content that was directly associated to the possibility of increase the number of responses used by campaigner to show progress in an *audit culture* based on metrics. Facebook created a business model that promoted and allowed skewing those metrics that served well the interests of a professional practices based on the auditing of the public's responses. This business was partially built on algorithms that limited and dosed the circulation of content but could be altered by paying advertisement. By doing so, a perfect circle was generated between a payment that increase content reach and provide a fast increase in the number of users' reactions that campaign managers needed to show progress in the campaign and justify their professional activities.

By restraining the circulation of content and selling the capacity to increase the reach of that content, Facebook set it up a system in which the number displayed by metrics was not only the result of the users' ability to catch attention of others, but it was also related to their capacity to buy it. As previously commented in in the section 2.2 of chapter four, campaigners considered that paying for advertisement was a requirement of being competitive on Facebook where other parties were doing the same (Daniel, interview, 2014; Nicolas, interview, 2014; Pablo, interview, 2014). Political parties cannot be separated from the *productive public* to whom the campaign is targeted and the circulation of content among users, and the use of advertisement and the coordination of campaign teams with the aim of modifying those indicators was directly related to the interests in gathering a public around their own accounts. As a result, asymmetries were part of different capacities to influence metrics via suggestions of content and pages that was manipulate by parties and Facebook business model. And, metrics were included in a dynamic that encourage the possibility of modifying the situation on which a progress in the indicator of public support could be shown.

The production of asymmetries between accounts on Facebook was also reinforced by what Federico (interview, 2014) and Daniel (interview, 2014) considered as the privilege positions of institutional accounts for catching the public's attention. As it was mentioned in the first section of chapter 4, the FA's Fan Page was followed by journalists who could quote and refer to content posted on this site as official statements. Similarly, users understood official page as the online representation of the party on Facebook and followed

it as a form to show their public support and interacted on the pages to ask questions about the campaign events. By being recognised as an official page validated by the Facebook authentication process, they were more likely to obtain more attention from users.

Similarly, the authentication of a page needs to be considered as part of the ACV dynamic in the production of value and it is related to the possibility of establishing differences between and the FA official site and other pages competing for same public's attention. If the value of page can be thought as the ability to concentrate the public interest, other pages could also be thought as a threat to the capacity of catching that attention. The termination of the Fan Page called Tabaré 2014⁹⁴ reported to the Facebook's client service team as a fake page by members of the FA can be understood as part of this competition for the embodiment and representation of the party on Facebook. This page had been able to gather thousands of users to support the presidential candidate. However, the National Commission considered that the page could interfere and compete with the official FA Fan Page as the real and legitimate source of information (Daniel, interview, 2014). The team could not trust pages managed from users outside the party and decided to report it as a misuse of the candidate identity who was not on Facebook and did not intend to have a Fan Page. Facebook had a role in creating an order in which some pages were authenticated as valid place to gather users interested in a party or candidate and others were removed as illegitimate competitors. By doing so, Facebook contribute to establish boundaries for organisations that separate their actions and identity from others who did not have the authority to communicate information on behalf of the party.

Conclusions

Chapter five focused on the practices of campaigners working at the National Commission and the inclusion of Facebook metrics as part of professional frame for action that required evidence and auditing the public. The focus on metrics and the affordances of Facebook to objectify value may be considered as a necessary complementary approach to chapter four, in which the metrics remained in the background of an analysis

⁹⁴ Access to the page <https://www.facebook.com/Tabare2014> was available until 25 November 2014.

mostly concerned in describing the enactment of diverse forms of values. To understand how metrics could be included in valuation processes, chapter five considered the performative effects of metrics on the pages, content and users, and it also described the importance of the users' culture, perspectives and goals in a specific scenario in these processes. Metrics were re-adjusted and re-signified in relation to certain frames for action that provided meaning to the public's participation and direction to the campaign.

The first section of this chapter unsettled the value of indicators to observe how their use in valuation process involved the re-signification and re-construction of meaning as part of specific frames and contexts. Facebook metrics constantly tracked the public's response to specific contents posted and pages, but they become useful for campaigners in specific frames that need to be understood as part of context, culture and personal interests. These practices fit well with Dewey's (1939) description of valuation as a calculation process between means and ends which are aimed at achieving a goal in specific contexts. For the teams involved with the National Commission, a process was created whereby the production of reports in which the comparisons between several Facebook accounts across time help to delimit a scenario and Facebook indicators became meaningful for understanding and explaining campaign activities and the FA's position in the electoral competition. Facebook's metrics could be open to multiple interpretations, but the numbers of Likes and Share were generally understood by users as indicators of people's support for a message associated with certain accounts and topics. The acknowledgment and acceptance of platform's metrics as indicators of success or lack of success allowed campaigners to analyse their actions and generate responses based on these metrics. They were used to encourage followers and spread enthusiasm associated with the idea of progress in the campaign of an increasing public support to the FA. Similarly, metrics were also included in valuation of content and pages and suggested the need of further action such as the use of paid advertisement.

The counting of Likes allowed the quantification of the public involvement with a specific content or page and provided a general equivalent that facilitated valuation processes (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013; Gerlitz and Helmond, 2013). Comparison between different pages and their relocation into other contexts such the reports used by campaign members allowed to settle down tensions around the value of actions

aimed at achieving results. Similarly, the use of Facebook's metrics for valuation processes was possible thanks to the existence of a shared cognitive frame in which the general users, consultants and the FA online campaign and politicians accepted and were able to share with others. The use of these metrics in reports helped to generate a convention around the value of specific content and the possibility of establishing their worth related to gain public support and reaching more users in an ACV dynamic.

Metrics were included in valuation practices that created a frame for action involving several actors and could be used to show progress made on the campaign and justify the practices carried out by the campaign team. In line with Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006) theory of the justification of practices, the second section understood the reports provided by consultants as fundamental for the creation of that frame embedded in a professional culture of audit.

For the National Commission, the co-creation of value by *productive public* was the result of the entanglement of actors' multiple interventions on Facebook. The possibility of recognising value for the FA's official campaign can be thought of as part of relational activities and demarcation of different agencies and ownership on specific parts of that process. In line with the idea of ACV, value was recognised as a result of valuations on the capacity of an account to catch the attention of a network of users. Their participation and responses to the content and a political proposal on a page were at the centre of value production. This was objectified by the metrics provided by Facebook, but, their recognition as useful component for valuations was the result of multiple entangled agencies that involved a professional group who re-signified and re-constructed those indicators. The National Commission team was in charge of the party central campaign and claimed the responsibility and credit for their achievements in the campaign. Successful and unsuccessful posts were partially attributed to their capacity to select the appropriate content. They required Facebook metrics and an analytical frame provided by consultants to legitimate their valuation of posts and pages. This process was not exempt from frictions, but part of a negotiation among users, Facebook as platform with multiple devices and frames that allow modifying those metrics.

These valuation processes were based on the three main components described in the conceptualisation of ACV. The first component was related to Facebook's embedded metrics that allowed the objectification

of the public reactions and provided the materiality for a general equivalent with which valuation on different contents and accounts (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013). The second component was related to the creation of a shared cognitive frame that could be personalised according to the users' interests and goals related to specific Facebook's pages. This framework was based on the recognition of Facebook as a massive medium for communication and the professional campaigners' validation of the platform's metrics to measure political communication performances. The third component was related to the possibility of gathering public support provided by the network of Facebook users.

Chapter 6 – Negotiating values on Facebook Groups

Epigraph

Figure 14: Screenshot taken from the Facebook Group Frente Amplio, Uruguay on the 20 September 2014.



Source: www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/permalink/10152271867812097/

A notification about the last article posted by Ciudadana on the Group 'Frente Amplio, Uruguay' is visible. Instead of the post itself, users now see a warning sign with a red exclamation mark on the Wall of this Group and a message saying: "This post has been removed or could not be loaded". Ciudadana considers the removal of the post as an attack to her right to speak out her political ideas. She reacts to this removal with a mixture of anger and resignation and makes a supposition about the group administrators⁹⁵: "They are most probably *paid* party officers who respond to the orders of the FA leadership" (Ciudadana, interview, 2014).

Ciudadana explains the removal of the article and her disenchantment with the FA as a result of the top-down policy adopted by the party. "They do not accept any critique and censor anyone who questions the party status quo and top leadership positions", and "if you make any type of critique they label you as a Pink"

⁹⁵ Group administrators were able to remove content and users from the group.

(Ciudadana, interview, 2014). In this context, “Pink” is a political reference to traditional right-wing parties and the combination of red and white colours used by the White Party and the Red-Coloured party⁹⁶. She understood this party attitude as detrimental to the transformative and democratic values that she associates with the real nature of left-wing groups.

For Ciudadana, a left-wing group needed to be an open space where decisions should be taken as a result of a collective and intellectual formative debate. To be on Facebook allowed her to communicate her political ideas to others and she has followed an expansive policy of posting on several Facebook Groups, such as Desenredo FA, Frenteampelistas que NO VOTAMOS A TABARÉ⁹⁷ or Por un FA más cerca del pueblo and Frente Amplio, Uruguay. She considered her posts as important intellectual contributions towards the renovation of left-wing groups; but her post on Frente Amplio, Uruguay was not accepted and removed from the Wall.

Jimena, one of the 7 administrators of the ‘Frente Amplio, Uruguay’, considered her voluntary role as a Group administrator a very demanding work and part of her commitment to support her political ideas and those of the party. For her, this position involved applying ethical criteria – ones which could inform interventions (see section 1.4 of chapter four) – and maintaining a clear political and editorial line to encourage people to support the party. While looking at the removed post, she says: “there was a long discussion about the freedom of speech on some of posts”, and she mocks an angry Group member who asked “Is this a dictatorship? Where is the freedom of speech?” (Jimena, interview, 2014). She replied with a tone which equally expressed frustration or anger:

“Here, there is no freedom of speech. There is a goal, which is to win votes, to win in the first round with majority [of representatives in the National Congress] (...) There are limits for the freedom of speech. There are specific places to say some things and some

⁹⁶ One of the multiple uses of the term was associated to the description of right-wing users who not always openly presented themselves on FA’s pages as political opponents, but they hide their true colours and mingle with FA supporters on Facebook Groups. Similarly, using the term was often related to the action of uncovering the real identity of Facebook users on a group; and it might have been thought as a form of stigmatising users who were considered as enemies of the FA.

⁹⁷ The group’s name makes a direct reference to the FA presidential candidate and show the discontent of part of FA sympathizer with this candidate. Capital letters were original in the Group name and it can be translated as Frenteampelistas who do not vote for Tabaré.

specific times to say it. Here and now, the objective is to do any possible effort to win the election. The discussion about Tabaré... If he is the right candidate or not, it is out of place! A discussion to blame one party of the Frente Amplio or make divisions does not help (...) Here, there is one specific goal which is to win the elections! If you don't like it, create your own page and go away" (Jimena, interview, 2014).

Introduction

This chapter analyses participation on two Open Groups, 'Frente Amplio, Uruguay'⁹⁸ and 'Por un Frente Amplio más cerca del pueblo' (For a Frente Amplio Closer to the People)⁹⁹. These Groups are understood as part of supporters' activities not officially recognised or coordinated by the political party. The participation on these Groups had some clear points of contact with the FA official campaign, and they were often used to replicate and distribute information created by the party. But, they clearly diverged from the practices of the National Commission analysed in the previous chapter. Some of the content posted on these Groups would have never been published on the FA official Fan Page because of their different moral and quality standards (Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014). These independent groups of supporters enacted frames for participating that relied more heavily on users' individual contributions.

The chapter's first section introduces these two Groups and describes how research participants understood users' participation on them. They are analysed as a plurality of actors who may be conceptualised as a *collective identity* aiming to achieve political goals in an open process, which required the construction of a shared cognitive frame (Melucci, 1995a, p44-5). The affordances provided by these pages allowed a different dynamic in which the posted content revealed the *multiple orders of worth* mentioned in the fourth chapter as well as different levels and types of users' participation. Melucci's conceptualisation of *collective identity* is considered useful to understand how users with different points of views were able to gather and stay together as a *productive public* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013).

⁹⁸ Frente Amplio, Uruguay <https://www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096>.

⁹⁹ Por un Fa más cerca del pueblo <https://www.facebook.com/groups/674152342677806>.

Participations were mostly aligned with the common goal of supporting the FA and winning the elections, but the different views and forms of participation also generated tensions that required negotiations and agreements on the value of interventions to maintain unity and collective support on these Groups. The second section considers how those tensions were part of a Group *collective identity* and a dynamic of participation that facilitated and encouraged users to post content according to their own ethical views. This created tensions between users on different pages and within members of a page. Facebook's affordances for value creation are analysed in relation to the possibility of translating and transforming users' interventions in a wider collaboration. The definition of what was considered a valid representation and enactment of the FA was subject to multiple interpretations, and the chapter observes how tensions could be solved either by achieving an agreement or enforcing one position over others.

The third section draws on Goffman's (1986) conceptualisation of frames to analyse value creation as a process demanding constant effort and a resignification of actions. The users' statements to create basic rules and boundaries on Frente Amplio Uruguay, is analysed as a process of creating a frame. Controversial situations generated instances of *participatory surveillance* (Albrechtslund, 2008) in which members' actions to police and denounce interventions were crucial mechanisms to maintaining the Groups as valuable spaces for the public. Here, the value of participation is analysed as part of a process conducted in network of peers that suggests certain cultural codes and political interests for the campaign. To observe discussions, open confrontations and rejections, provides an opportunity to analyse value as part of a process that involved tensions and negotiations around the FA's *collective identity*. This section also pays special attention to the actions and relationships that allowed the temporary settling down of tensions.

Finally, the conclusion summarises the main observations on how a *collective identity* could be enacted in a platform that facilitated users' multiple forms of participations and *orders of worth*. In line with the idea of Account Centred Value (ACV), the chapter considers that participation and value was mostly associated with the interests of specific users and how they were able to frame the participation of others and re-signify them as a *productive public* who added up value to a political project.

Section 1 – Participation on Open Groups

Section 1.1 - For a Frente Amplio Closer to the People: *Leadership and asymmetries in participation.*

The Facebook Group 'For a Frente Amplio Closer to the People' was created a few months before the elections on July 2014. Max, Joaquin and Arturo described it as the result of a series of conversations among friends who, according to Max (interview, 2014), shared "a similar, left-wing, political sensibility, which we recognise as part of Frente Amplio". All of them have reached their 40s and had previous political experience directly associated with the political parties of the FA or with NGOs working in human rights or trade unions, and non-formal political initiatives such as the Redes Frenteamplistas and the Banderazo¹⁰⁰ or the group of debtors from Uruguayan Mortgage Bank¹⁰¹. However, they have distanced themselves from the party's local committees because they considered them to be part of an aged and calcified structure which has become deaf to the voice of lay citizens and party supporters who want to actively participate in politics to make progressive changes in the country (Joaquin, interview, 2014; Leandro, interview, 2014; Max, interview, 2014). Based on their previous experiences, they knew that Facebook could be used as a hub to gather people with similar interests and needs, and they created this Group as a response to that feeling of disenchantment and distance between party supporters and the party structure (Joaquin, interview, 2014; Max, interview, 2014). The initiative of this group of political fellows was soon joined by more than three thousand members by the end of November 2014.

The creation of the Group automatically generated a constitutive differentiation between administrators and non-administrators. In this case, Arturo, Joaquin, Leandro and Max became administrators and faced the initial task of promoting the Group and invite users to join. They did so by inviting their own contacts and promoting the Group on other Facebook pages. Being an administrator further involved moderating content and discussions on the Group's Wall. They always had the last words on what content was appropriate and

¹⁰⁰ See last section of chapter 1 for a short description of the Redes Frenteamplistas and the Banderazo.

¹⁰¹ This group became a large Facebook Page with national representation and public recognition on newspapers. They started by using Facebook as its main channel for communication and announcing decisions and initiatives. Their Facebook page was <https://www.facebook.com/Deudores-BHU-485091998204354/>.

could also prioritised specific posts by pinning them to the top of the Group's Wall. Pinned posts with invitations to events and especially content or reminders were often found on For a Frente Amplio Closer to the People's Wall to fixed and clearly prioritised some post among the ongoing cascade of unpinned posts.

As administrators, they also wrote the group's description in which they stated the original ideas and aims for the Group, which were clearly reflected in its name: For a Frente Amplio Closer to the People:

"Is not a list, nor a political sector, is a move tending to rebuild ties with hurt partners, we bet on citizen participation as a constructor of a better society (...) We appeal to the enormous human resources, intellectuals, the experience gained to take urgent action, BECAUSE WE DO NOT DESERVE TO RETURN TO THE SAD YEARS OF EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF, AND THE COUNTRY, NEEDS A 3rd. GOVERNMENT CLOSER TO PEOPLE"¹⁰².

The ultimate goal of this Group was to gather public support to reach a third FA government in which people could participate. Max described the Group as an initiative to reenergise supporters when the electoral times required it the most and provide them with "enthusiasm for the Frente Amplio and interest in working for the changes that they wanted" (interview, 2014).

They have understood that some people were frustrated with certain decisions taken by FA's leaders and lack of responses to important social issues such as in the increasing living costs. Max (interview, 2014) considered that people needed a different space to participate and satisfy the need of expressing their ideas and criticising what they thought was wrong. On the 29 September 2014, Max wrote a post on the Group Wall describing what he considered the feelings of many FA supporters who "went to their homes, because 'we saw things that were not right', but 'were not heard', the answer was to despise our constructive contributions, we wanted to contribute, we could not contribute". Similarly, as it was tacitly mentioned in the group's description, being in this group was also associated with defending welfare policies associated with the left and preventing right-wing parties to reach the government (Jimena, interview, 2014; Joaquin, interview, 2014; Leonardo, interview, 2014; Max, interview, 2014).

¹⁰² Text in capital letters is part of the original version of the group's description. Translation made by the thesis' author.

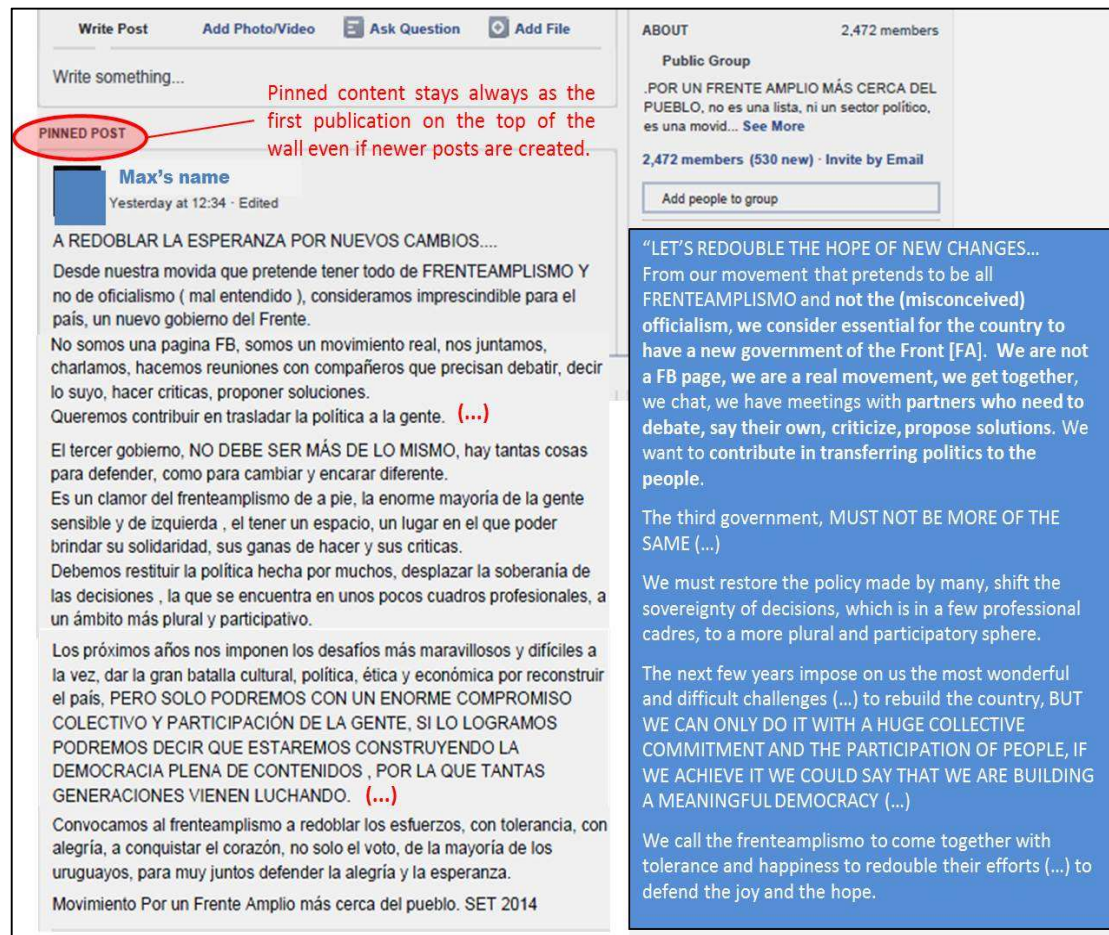
This call for the left-wing supporters to make an extra effort and resist was part of a political culture which made reference to certain political traditions, language and symbolic representation of the FA. The previously mentioned slogan “A redoblar” (Let’s redouble) was also used by Max’s in the post below (figure 15). Here, the slogan was not only used as call to make an extra effort in the middle of a political battle, but also referred the left-wing groups historical ability to build a popular movement despite having been outlawed, marginalised and persecuted in the past. This culture went beyond the party and was part of a broader political culture that understand equal rights and collective discussion as part of civic duty and form of citizens’ empowerment. According to Max, Joaquin and Arturo the group was created as an open space, accessible for the participation of everyone. In line with this idea, the user’s capacity to publish content on Group’s Wall without any previous authorisation was also thought of a form of promoting people’s participation in “non-formal place where people could steam out their anguish, say what they wanted and to say with absolute freedom (...) and what was important for them” and being heard by others (Max, interview, 2014). Joaquin (interview, 2014) and Max (interview, 2014) described the majority of Group members as FA supporters who were not actively involved in the FA’s formal structure and were looking for an alternative space to participate.

Facebook was the channel of this specific group of Frenteamplistas to communicate with a broader audience and share content publicly, but the founders of the group considered that being a real movement was associated with face to face meetings and group discussions. Max’s post below refers to the involvements of bodies as sign of political commitment: “We are not a FB page, we are a real movement, we get together, we chat, we have meetings”. FA supporters met in bars, group member’s houses and local sport and social clubs between July and November to provide a space where “everyone who has or once had sympathy for the FA was welcome to criticise, propose ideas and express their opinions” (Max, interview, 2014).

The distinction made by Max between a group and a Facebook page might be considered as an important reaffirmation of a specific political culture which invites everyone to active participation in discussions. Max and Arturo sometimes used the Like Button on content and comment published by others as form of publicly encouraging and awarding the participation of those who posted their personal views. Max was not always

clicking because he had liked or personally agreed with the content of a post¹⁰³. Instead, he used the button to provide public recognition and approval to other's participation on the Group. The Like Button was used as a form of encouraging peoples' participation in a discussion open to all.

Figure 15: Post pinned on the wall of Frente Amplio Círculo de la Gente by the administrator on 24 September 2014.



Source: www.facebook.com/groups/674152342677806/. Translation conducted by the author. Some extracts from the original text are omitted.

However, an analysis of the post on the Wall between September and November 2014 showed that most members did not engage publicly on the site and many posts were not awarded with Likes or Comments. On this particular Group posts often received between 3 and 20 Likes and less than 8 comments. The possibility of posting content was available to all members, but in agreement with Gerbaudo (2014, p266)

¹⁰³ As it was described in chapter four, the Like button was usually associated with a positive response towards the published content. But it could be used with different intentions and understood in different ways. It was always considered as a form of personally recognizes the content relevance as meaningful in front of other.

and Segerberg and Bennett (2011) analysis, this research observed that only a small proportion of users were regular content producers on the Group's Wall. Among the minority who posted on the Wall, administrators had a strong presence quantifiable in their higher number of interventions, daily activity and use of pinned posts. Participation on the Group's Wall was regularly exercised and monopolised among a subgroup of around 20 users who in some cases had developed strong bonds cultivated in leisure and social activities and offline political meetings. Max and Arturo use of the Like Button and Comments to appreciate participation may be considered as an attempt to change that pattern of participation.

Some users constantly used their Personal Pages only to share posts created by others. They did not produce any original content, but mostly used their membership to Groups to disseminate content generated by others and especially from official FA pages. The action of disseminating and replicating content from one page to others by using the Share Button was colloquially called bell-ringing or *repicar* in Spanish. Not only does the verb in Spanish refer to the action of ringing the bells, but *repicar* also refers to the play of popular percussion musical instruments for *candombe* and the *repique tambour* used during the massive celebration of carnival¹⁰⁴ (Intendencia de Montevideo, 2015; Sutton, 2013). The *repique* on Facebook was the commonly use term to refer to action of disseminating and amplifying the scope of a message through the accounts and pages managed by party supporters. This was usually explicitly requested by party managers such as Daniel, Federico or Nicolas, as well as by administrators of non-official Facebook Groups such as Max, María or Jimena.

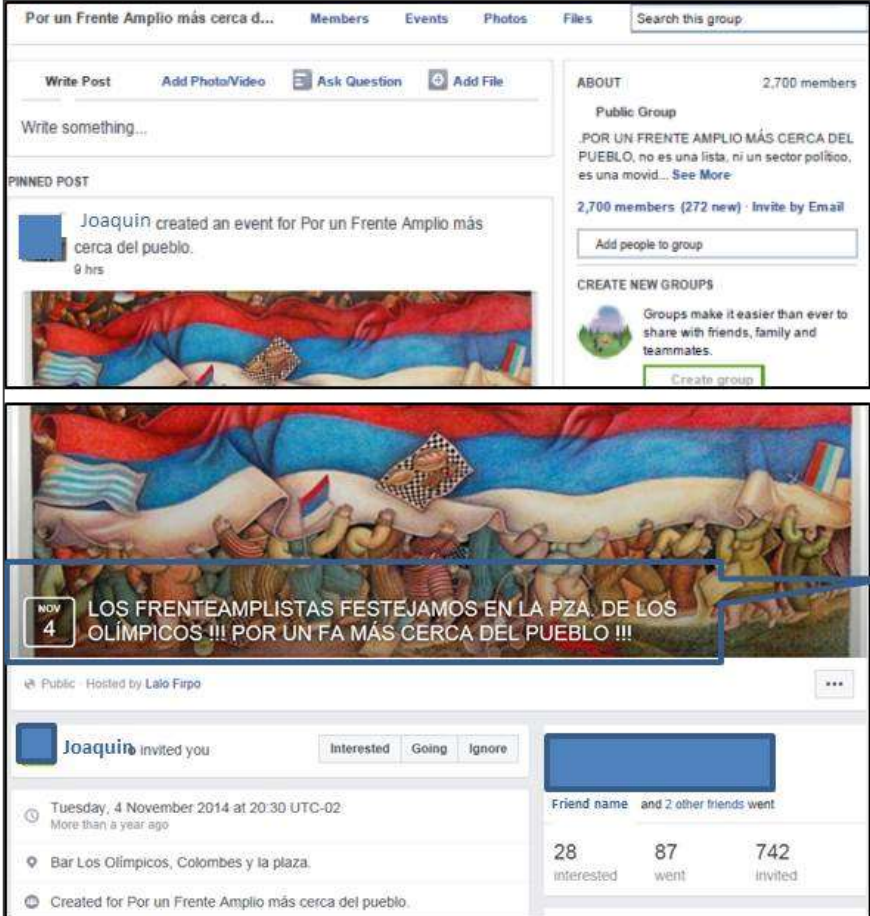
The vast majority of the posts observed on the Wall aimed at encouraging party supporters to celebrate the FA. The Facebook Event¹⁰⁵ created on 30 October clearly depicted the group as spaces to celebrate the FA as a political force and reassurance supporters with an electoral triumph. Critiques to FA and government,

¹⁰⁴ The carnival is the most popular celebration of Uruguay and is a massive form of street artistic demonstrations in Montevideo. It has connections with the African culture and rhythms brought by slaves in time of the Spanish colony, and nowadays, it involves parades with music, dance, parody and songs full of social denunciations, political connotations and grotesque personifications. The celebrations start with 'The Callings' or *Llamadas* in Spanish, in which one of the tambours mark the time of coming together to dance, sing, celebrate and play instruments. Similarly, the *candome* described the "conversation" of its three different tambours as a fundamental part of its artistic form, in which one of the drums calls and indicate tempo and changes and the others respond.

¹⁰⁵ To see a short definition of Facebook's Event look at section 2.2.3 in chapter one.

such as Ciudadana's article, were not alien to the group and were hosted, but they were unusual and only received a couple Likes. Arturo, one of the administrators, also shared in more than one occasion posts considering the need of renewing the form of participation and the decision-making process inside the FA, but this type of posts generated very few responses.

Figures 16: Celebration event created and pinned by Joaquin on the wall of the group on 30 October 2014.



Event created and pinned on the group by Joaquin on the 30 October. Below the Event's page which allow the creator to send messages and invitation to other users.

THE FRENTeamPLISTAS CELEBRATE IN THE OLYMPIANS' SQUARE !!! FOR A FA CLOSER TO THE PEOPLE !!!

Source: www.facebook.com/groups/674152342677806/.

This dynamic of participation reinforced opinions and ideas which were praised by others clicking on the Like Button, commenting or simply mirroring those views with ideologically-aligned posts supporting the FA. Similarly, the language and content of posts had a celebratory and supportive character. Posting for a public on the Group Wall and interacting with others via comments or Facebook's buttons, tended to reproduce the same ideas and reinforce their own initiative and leadership of a few users in a Group of thousands of users who have no public visibility or recognition. They were FA supporters who have re-appropriated

Facebook via the creation and personalisation of a Group to share their ideas comfortably and justified their own reasons to campaign for the FA.

Section 1.2 - Frente Amplio, Uruguay: *Diversity in the biggest FA's Group.*

By looking at the number of members, 'Frente Amplio, Uruguay'¹⁰⁶ was the most popular of all Facebook Groups created by FA's supporters. And, as it was already mentioned by Ciudadana in the epigraph, visitors could have easily mistaken it for a site run by party officers. Contrary to Fan Pages, Facebook did not provide any mechanisms to authenticate Groups as the official page of an organisation. The group's description last updated on the 22 August 2012 did not say who had created this Group, and it provided a unclear definition regarding its origins and relationship with the party structure. It was described as a "Group for voters and supporters of Frente Amplio", and then provided an abstract consideration of the FA government as an "historical" transformative force and as a project for a more democratic country "centred on the integral development, welfare and work for all Uruguayans". Its creation was before 14 October 2008, but the exact date was not available on the page. Similarly, its creation date was also blurry in Adan's (interview, 2014) memory, who founded the group and left it after the 2009 national elections. He described the Group as the result of an exploration of a new world outside any party campaign strategy, and supporters' enthusiasm and desire to take the FA flag and mobilise independently (Adan, interview, 2014).

The Group grew continuously during the 2014 campaign; and by the end of November, it had almost 17,000 members. As suggested in the post below (figure 17), the number of members was especially important for the supporters in the context of an electoral competition. On the 9th of October 2014, Jimena published a post to celebrate the reach of 15,000 members. In it, she framed the indicator within a specific logic of action that can be suggested as a *popularisation of audit culture* in which users could use metrics to constantly measure progress according to their own criteria and valuation processes. By using a language loaded with left-wing references such as "to victory" (*hasta la victoria*)¹⁰⁷ and a call "to redouble" efforts, she asked

¹⁰⁶ The URL for this group was <https://www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/>.

¹⁰⁷ 'Hasta la victoria!' or 'Hasta la victoria siempre!' are both phrases usually used by Latin American left-wing movements and parties. These phrases have been popularised by the Fidel Castro and others related to the Cuban Communist Party and the image and words of Ernesto Guevara. They have been widely

members of the Group to continue supporting the party and campaigning to gain more members. This thesis suggests that Facebook's indicators could be understood from the perspective of a *popular audit culture* in which the numbers provided by the platform were thought of a contribution to an electoral triumph.

Figure 17: Posts celebrating the reach of more than 15.000 members on Frente Amplio, Uruguay.



Source: www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/. Translation conducted by the author.

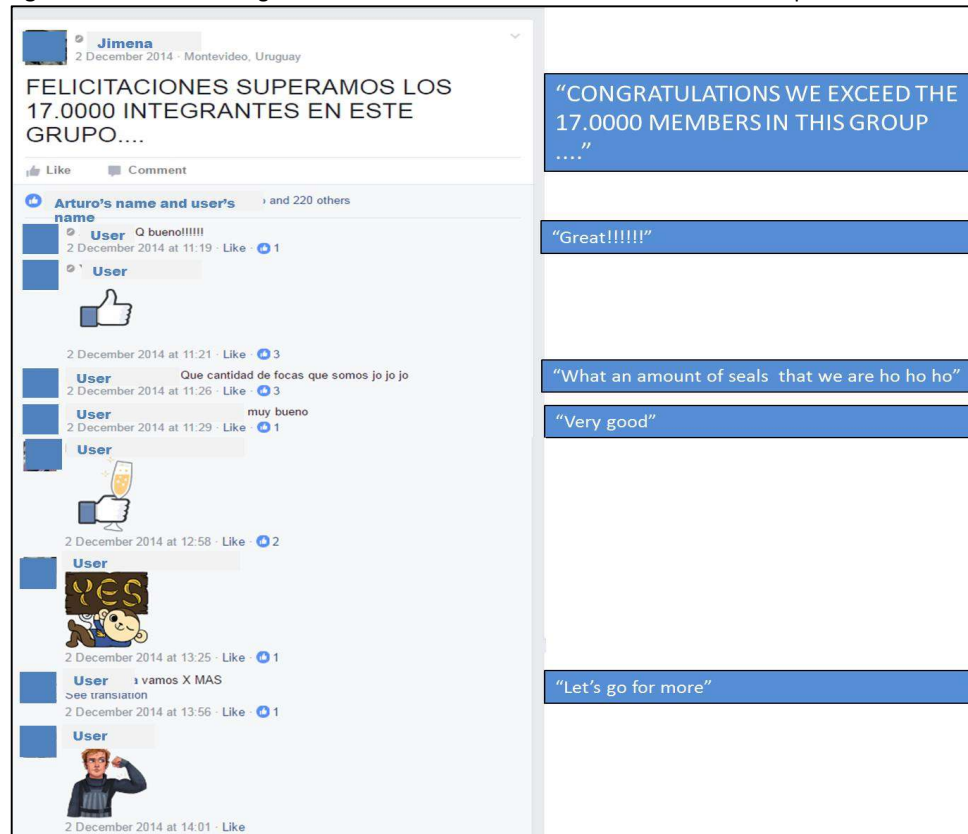
spread and used to encourage supporters. They suggest that the victory is part of an ongoing struggle achieved as part of continues efforts (Spencer, 2007, 16-7). To victory is one of the possible translations which have been used to refer to this phrase as a form of encouraging supporters in their political journeys. The use of this phrase next to the local call for redoubling efforts is line with Spencer (2007, 16-7) analysis of the text as part of a left-wing ethos which considers politics as a continuous struggle for freedom and social conquests.

Similarly, a post created a week after the ballotage put the focus on the growing number of members as a reason to celebrate and self-congratulate the group for its increasing size and strength. To reach 17,000 members was considered as another achievement in this logic that considered the increasing number as an indicator of progress and a reason to celebrate. The festive spirit of the posts below (figure 18) was shared by many others who responded with an unusual higher number of Comments and Likes. They generated a loop of *digital enthusiasm* (Gerbaudo, 2016) that triggered an increasing participation and reactions on the Wall.

Among the tens of comments, there was a broad range of pictures and emoticons with signs of approval and happy faces, cartoons and comments, which were part of a casual form of communication. Similarly, the typing mistake in the number of members on the post was noticed by one the members who ironically wrote “Actually, the 0s worth nothing?”. In line with this causal style of communication, comments and pictures of seals – a mammal usually portrayed in large numbers – showed the members’ ability to make fun of a derogatory term used by the opposition to portray FA’s supporter as dumb followers who can only applaud as seals in a circus without thinking. The number of Comments and the 220 Likes on the post also reflected this hyperbolic self-celebration generated by the counting of those who were already considered as party supporters and contributors to the performative capacity of metrics for generating enthusiasm. A cartoon of a man exhibiting his biceps was posted as a comment that associated the announcement of the 17,000 members with the Group’s strength and its capacity to mobilise a growing massive public support (Arturo, interview 2014; María, interview, 2014).

In line with Grosser’s (2014) analysis on Facebook, valuations were based on the idea of progress and FA supporters framed this idea as part of the electoral competition considered as an especial circumstance in which the goal of obtaining public support could be measured by the number of Group members. The number of users, Likes, Shares or Comments were not valuable on their own, but praised as part of an exercise that looked for the opportunities to add more users. As part of the *popularisation of audit culture*, the notion of progress became a permanent goal that required a constant self-measurement of the Group’s capacity to generate public responses over time.

Figure 18: Post celebrating the reach of more than 17.000 members on the Group.



Source: www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/. Translation conducted by the author.

The valuation of page was not static, but it could be renewed anytime that a new post created an instance for measuring the public reactions on a Wall. A similar type of valuation exercise was involved on a post that proposed members of the Group to comment on their location to show how massive the support for the FA was. The post read: “let’s see how big our group is, and in which part of the country we are. fellows, viva the frente!!!!!!!! i am from tacuarembó, you?”¹⁰⁸. Several hundred people liked the post and replied with comments that celebrated the large numbers and distribution of supporters throughout the whole country. Here, the valuation added a personal component that is associated with the notion of *collective identity* in which users could voice their personal identity associated with a geographical position and also feel part of large and powerful FA Group spread across the country. A response to this post saying: “let’s go fellow we are more, don’t stop until victory” summarised this self-appraisal exercise based on personal forms of audits and the idea of success associated with the possibility of measuring increasing numbers of people from

¹⁰⁸ The lack of capital letters used reflects a common informal style in which simple syntactic rules were ignored. Tacuarembó is the capital of a department with the same name in north centre of the country. Translation made by the thesis’ author.

different locations. The larger and more spread the users were, the more powerful and likely victorious some of the members felt the group was.

As part of the personalisation and diversification of frames for valuation suggested in ACV dynamics, the topic and message of each post could be relevant for one user only, or for many of the members in the network. Valuation could be applied to all kind of different issues and according to diverse and even incompatibles forms of participation, such as the post advertising financial loans or vitamins on a political page (see chapter four). But, in line with the conceptualisation of an *ethical capital* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013, p104-5), the possibility of gaining value required the gathering users' responses around the statement suggested by a user with an account on a Wall.

In line with the conceptualisation of *ethical capital*, value creation was related to the capacity of proposing an activity on which agreement with others for a common interest could be achieved. A group with thousands of members was considered as an opportunity to reach a larger public and seen as a space where supporters could campaign and contribute to reinforce the idea of electoral victory. The Walls of Frente Amplio, Uruguay and For a FA Closer to the People mostly show posts that were supportive of the party. An example of this type of message was posted by a user who reused the material generated by the Socialist Party (PS) and the National Commission (originally created to respond to Lacalle Pou to challenge Vázquez) to highlight a series of achievements of the FA. During the heat of a street rally followed by journalists, Lacalle Pou performed an acrobatic position using a street sign in the small city of Cardona on 31 July. And, he challenged the FA candidate by saying to journalists "tell Tabaré that I wait for him in this flag" (Subrayado, 2014; El Observador, 2015). The flag is the name of a position made by grasping a standing post with both hands and suspending the body perpendicular to the post. The posture requires a certain level of physical strength, and journalists took his comment as a provocation to a much older FA candidate. Local and national media commented that this was an unusual way of campaigning for a presidential position but were caught by the amusing performance.


Figure 19: Pictures of National Party candidate Lacalle Pou during a political rally on 31 July 2014 in Cardona.



Source: María Inés Hiriart in El País (2014) <http://www.elpais.com.uy/informacion/truco-lacalle-pou-bandera.html> and La República (2014) <http://www.republica.com.uy/lacalle-pou-hizo-la-bandera/471459/>


The Socialist Party considered the Lacalle Pou's challenge as an opportunity to respond with a series of statements showing the government achievements on social, economic, political and civic rights. These were portrayed as important "flags" that really matter for the development of the country and the people, and not only part of a simple campaign for entertaining voters. The statements were headed with a rhetorical question: "Did you want flags? Take that!!!" followed by information on the diverse achievements reach during the last two consecutive FA's presidential terms. Not only did the party reply to the provocation, but they were also used to promote the party and portray Lacalle Pou as a shallow candidate running a banal campaign without discussing any plans for addressing Uruguayan social and economic problems (Daniel, interview, 2014; Federico, interview, 2014; Valenti, interview, 2014). As part of a process of stating a political identification, a differentiation with a competitor portrayed as the embody of shallow and unfit candidate for the presidency was important. The message provided users with a reason to justify their support to the FA as a meaningful a valuable choice in relation to others. These statements were shared and reused and celebrated by users as part of their personal political choice on different Facebook Groups, including Frente Amplio, Uruguay.

Figure 20: Statements with the heading “Did you want flags? Take that!!!” posted on Frente Amplio, Uruguay.




In 2013 citrus fruits started to be exported to the USA accounting a value of US\$ 20: After 18 years [of no commercial activity]

Number of Likes, 7
Number of Shares, 88



The primary students received computers, the secondary students also and now it is the turn of universities' students



Like - Comment - Share

20 people like this.

MUY BUENO : SEGUI MANDANDO

LOGROS!!!!!!!

1 hr · Like

cos-ovro Espanto hay que mandarle un informe a kukito para allomario

41 mins · Like

otitoyyBiva Sí, señor, siga mandando.

21 mins · Like

yua Que no se olviden los jubilados de esto, yo siempre tuve miedo a jubilarme, porque al poco tiempo ya estabas en la miseria, me jubile con Tabaré en 2010 y estoy muy contento, eso es lo que tenemos que decirle a la gente, todo los logros y lo que se va a seguir haciendo, vamos que podemos. Viva el Frente

10 mins · Like · 1

Year	Increase in pensions	Inflation
2000	3,52%	5,05%
2001	3,08%	3,59%
2002	3,60%	25,94%
2003	3,81%	10,19%
2004	6,22%	7,59%
2005	9,14%	4,90%
2006	13,71%	6,38%
2007	11,22%	8,50%
2008	15,96%	9,19%
2009	15,44%	5,90%
2010	12,24%	6,93%
2011	11,18%	8,60%
2012	13,59%	7,48%
2013	12,65%	8,52%
2014	11,54%	8,6%

GREAT Javier KEEP ON SENDING ACHIEVEMENTS

a repost must be sent to kukito [Lacalle Pou nickname used by FA's supporters] to update him

Yes! keep on sending.

Pensioners must not forget this. i was always afraid of retire myself, because one was in poverty soon after. i retired myself with Tabaré in 2010 and i am very happy. this is what we need to tell to the people. all the achievements and what we will continue doing. Let's go, we can. Viva the Frente [Frente Amplio].

Source: www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/. Translation conducted by the author.

By Following Gerbaudo (2016, p257) and Kavada (2015, p880-1), the construction of a political identity on Facebook could be associated with a process of personal nourishing, in which collective enthusiasm in a group can be thought as important components for building up self-confidence. People became part of these groups to “develop a sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves” (Gerbaudo, 2014, p268). By belonging to these group and interacting with others, they partially and temporary fulfilled their identities and recognised being in a group as a form of advocating for a set of values – political, as well as cultural and ethical – represented by the FA and collectively recognised as meaningful.

The image of the National candidate performing an acrobatic figure was used to make jokes with in the most diverse situations that also showed the digital affordances to modify, re-contextualize and re-circulate

content. The image of Lacalle Pou went under a process of transformation which sometimes reflected well-developed Photoshop skills as well as non-professional practices with other software such as Paint or Power Point. The modified images kept some of the original elements – the candidate using a standing post – but added diverse and unusual circumstances and images to make fun of the National Party's candidate. Party officers argued that they never could have published those memes on the official sites for ethical reasons, but they laughed along with them and commented on Lacalle Pou's ridiculous behaviour (Federico, interview, 2014; Nicolas, interview, 2014).

As previously mentioned, these statements started as an initiative from the PS and travelled on Facebook to become viral. Not only did this happen because users have the possibility to re-appropriate the image, but the image also marked what was considered as a banal campaign from Lacalle Pou. He was considered as someone who did not represent the values recognised as important for the Frenteamplistas and was trying to avoid talking about political plans by using performances suitable for a TV show (as suggested in images included below in figure 21). The issue around an acrobatic flag and achievements associated with left-wing policies helped to unify a political community and reject the candidate of opposition.

Figure 21: Mashup images of Lacalle Pou making the flag



Source: various Facebook

Section 2 – Tensions in direct forms of participation.

Section 2.1 – Inter-pages tension.

Different actors who recognised themselves with the FA created different pages that entered into competition for the use of names, images and their identification with the party. The Fan Page Tabaré 2014 was not the only page involved in tensions around the identity of FA with the National Commission. Similarly, Frente Amplio, Uruguay was also reported to Facebook Customers Services as a Group that was using the party's name and material from the official campaign without authorisation. In line with Melucci's analysis of *collective identity* (1995a, p48), various actors who have a common interest also clashed for the representation of the FA and Uruguayan left. Supporters in Groups such as For Frente Amplio Closer to the People, Frenteampelistas who do not vote for Tabaré, or Fente Amplio, Uruguay, were struggling to be recognised as part of the FA. They clashed and entered in relations of inter-page tensions with campaign teams and groups who wanted to make a clear separation between them and other and claimed the FA as part of their identities and flag for political action.

These tensions needed to be considered in relation to a digital medium that facilitated the reproduction of content and within the specific context of an election, with different FA's group competing for the attention of users, and groups who were outside the FA and tried to promote false information about the party and candidates. The National Commission understood that an unclear differentiation between the official campaign and the supporters' re-appropriation of material could have unexpected and negatively consequences if people, "even with the best intentions" (Daniel, interview, 2014; Paula, interview, 2014), started making inappropriate comments or posting inaccurate information. The use of the party name and official material easily copied and reused on Facebook pages was a problem for the National Commission. Daniel, as a party officer, contacted the administrators of Frente Amplio, Uruguay to ask them to stop using official images and slogans that could be easily mistaken for the official campaign.

By denouncing Frente Amplio, Uruguay's for inappropriate use of content, party officers partially achieved their goal of establishing boundaries to define their practices as the party's official voice on Facebook and

promote the official Fan Page as the space where people should focus their attention. The administrators of this Group received a warning about the possibility of banning the page as a result of the enforcement of Facebook terms and condition applied by the company client service team. Administrators' considered that this treat could be reduced by changing the settings of the Group from public to closed (see section 2.2.2 of chapter one for a brief description), and they did so to avoid non-members could access content and denounce it as inappropriate (Jimena, interview, 2014). In this case the reinforcement of the boundaries could be thought as a mechanism to protect the *productive public* and *collective identity* of the Group. But, this change also reduced the Group's ability to catch the attention of a broader audience and gain more public support and campaigners. As a result, the content of this Group previously distributed and endorsed by several thousands of members lost visibility, and pages such the FA official Fan Page reduce the competition to gain the public attention and distribute information about the party.

Section 2.2 – Tension with user participations inside a Group.

Not only was Frente Amplio, Uruguay the biggest Facebook Group, but it was also subject to a different type of dynamic and form of participation. No other Group dedicated to the FA campaign grew at same pace, and the large number of members seems to work as a magnet to attract more users to join the group. This different dynamic was associated with a variety of contents constantly renewed by more diverse users and types of participations. In line with the observations provided in chapter four, various types of users with different interests were found on 'Frente Amplio, Uruguay'. Here, disciplined party members participated together with supporters without political affiliations and others who did not recognise themselves as Frenteampelistas. They all composed a large public that help to the Groups' aim of increasing the number of members in a form of participation that required low threshold level for entering.

The main aim of increasing public support combined with the low threshold level for participation brought many tensions inside the Group. The constant flow of new users in a page which allowed creating content independently brought posts containing pornography or commercial products and services on a regular basis. These types of interventions were denounced by group members who considered them as clearly

outside a valid intervention and against the Group's aims and interests. One of the several messages showing indignation about the recurrent posts linked to pornographic sites was created on 17 July 2014.

“HEY, PLEASE PUT [USER'S NAME] OR WHOEVER IS ON A LEASH... IS POSTING RISQUÉ THINGS ON A PAGE THAT IT SUPPOSES TO BE ABOUT POLITICS. IF I WANT TO SEE PORN, I GET INSIDE A CINEMA ON COLONIA STREET (...) I BELIEVE THAT THIS PAGE IS NOT FOR THAT”¹⁰⁹.

The user defined his presence and belonging to the group in relation to what he considered the Group should have been for and should not be. Similarly, he understood that what others were posting was affecting the whole group and they – the administrators, and members like himself – needed to denounce and stop such type of publications in their space dedicated to campaigning for and supporting the FA.

Another type of disruptive and provocative intervention was to be found with users entering the group only to insult the FA or to support candidates from other parties. They were usually rapidly denounced by members and removed by administrators. But, these posts could trigger discussions with many responses on the Wall that reinforced the ties of the members and their identity. In line with Melucci's (1995a, p48-9) analysis, the defence of a group from outsiders was an important element in for the generation of a *collective identity*, attacks to FA triggered strong responses and a common Frenteamplista feeling of being against a right-wing ideology and the exclusive privileges of “aristocratic and oligarchy” sector associated to the National Party and the Red-Coloured Party. These reactions reaffirmed a sense of being with others who were together to oppose those policies and promote a left-wing identity and policies associated with solidarity, openness and inclusiveness.

Regarding those disruptive participations from users who opposed the FA, Jimena considered the tensions and issues were related to the constant arrival of newcomers to the Group and reviewed her responsibility and practices as a Group administrator.

¹⁰⁹ Capital letters are a feature of the original post.

“If someone asks to join the group and only have a handful of friends on Facebook, do not have any relatives¹¹⁰ and only have content related to football and nasty stuff on their walls, I do not approve the request... Perhaps they are great guys. I cannot know. But, I prefer not to take the risk and include someone who will be a problem” (Jimena, interview, 2014).

However, Jimena knew that other administrators allowed anyone requesting permission to enter the group. For them, Frente Amplio, Uruguay and For a Frente Amplio Closer to the People were mainly spaces for networking with in a political campaign. Ideally, being a member of the group was for those interested in supporting the FA. But, it actually was only a matter of clicking a button and did not require any specific kind of commitment or certainty regarding who and why users were on the Group. Jimena could not help but include her own personal ideas marked by an experience as a communist member during the sad years of dictatorship.

“There may be a torturer in the group, the worst crap. And you are talking about human rights. You can’t know. Some people may be whites¹¹¹ or from the red-coloured party and stay in the group to spy. One doesn’t know who is there” (Jimena, interview, 2014).

The concept of flaming may be partially useful to contemplate Jimena’s anxiety regarding who were in the Group. She was only one of the nine administrators of Frente Amplio, Uruguay. The idea of inclusiveness and the aim of increasing support implied allowing the participation of people who were not interested in collaborating with the FA but behaved in a way that may be described as flaming given by “the freedom of users to present any type of information they want has been identified as a mechanism for increased instances of antisocial Internet behavior” (Woolley et al., 2010, p638). This antisocial behaviour can be understood as the behaviour of users who opposed to the interests of a *productive public* or refused to follow the rules established by the Group. They were rapidly recognised as trolls outside the valid frame for participating and undesirable people to be expelled.

However, tensions also arose from interactions between users considered as FA supporters. Pedro’s (interview, 2014) views on how people behave on Facebook Groups was summarised in one sentence: “on

¹¹⁰ The platform allows users to specify and flag users as family members.

¹¹¹ Whites refers to the supporters of the Uruguayan National Party.

social media everyone throws [on the wall of a Group] their own things and cares three cucumbers¹¹² about what the other said". In other words, he explained that the informality and the lack of basic codes for communicating were part of a general loose form of interactions on Facebook Groups. Pedro's attempt to simplify the source of conflicts in a single sentence can be reviewed by the idea of Facebook as a space where multiple interests, interpretations of value and various ethical horizons coexisted. For Ciudadana, Pedro or Jimena who had a long history of participation in trade unions and the Communist party, a political Group should have been a space for debate, theoretical analysis and political argumentation around key issues and political economy concepts. They considered that political participation required discipline and a commitment to translate political ideas into actions. This was everything but near to what other Group members had in mind. For some people being in the group was just a way of spending their free-time on relevant and sometimes passionate topics, which could be naturally come together with all kinds of swearing for Boardaberry, the Red Coloured Party candidate, and Lacalle Pou. In line with Pedro's descriptions, many users were not interested in spending time with a rationally interexchange of arguments and debates. Any kind of language and image could be used on the wall, and their interventions showed that. Ciudadana's political economy analysis of the government could have been followed by a post with three cucumbers if they were painted with the colours of the FA.

Ciudadana's critique, mentioned in the epigraph, on the political course taken by the FA showed the tensions between the objective of gaining support to win the elections and freedom of speech considered as a crucial value for participation. Jimena considered this situation and her discontent by saying: "I am communist. I think that the economic model is finished. If someone puts me in the corner, I have to say that the Frente Amplio is the best of all the bad options that we have" (interview, 2014). But Ciudadana's post was also considered as a dividing post and against the electoral goals, and thus, removed from public display on Frente Amplio, Uruguay. This was related to a basic premise of a frame, based on campaigning for the FA, reinforcing a political unity with positive messages, and adding numbers of users to show an increasing

¹¹² To care three cucumbers about something is a way of saying that someone does not care at all.

public support. Anything that could divide the group was seen as out of the frame of Frente Amplio, Uruguay and considering a form of devaluing the mission of the Group.

A dissimilar dynamic with different boundaries for participation but similar result occurred on For a Frente Amplio Closer to the People, where Ciudadana's critique to the party's leadership remained on the Wall. Here, the frame for participation included those who were disenchanted with the FA. And the selection of an Open Groups partially responded to a specific idea and decision on the politics for organising a productive *public* aligned with values of openness and inclusion. However, her intervention did not receive much public support from a Group who had the goal of reaching a third government with an already established candidate. Ciudadana's critique was accepted in the Group, but the value of her intervention was considered as part of a valuation process that pursue an electoral goal. And, users on these Groups did not use the Like Button or provide positive comments to support a post that was not aligned to that goal.

Another type of tension was generated by content produced by a FA supporter with the image of Lacalle Pou (figure 23). This post was related to the acrobatic performance on the street and his challenging statement: "tell to Tabaré that I wait for him in this flag" (Subrayado, 2014). The post showed a digital modified picture of two dancers using a pole dance that was original taken from a popular TV programme similar to the British Strictly Come Dancing show¹¹³. Vázquez was personified as the male dancer who grabs Lacalle Pou, personify as a female dancer, from his back. By considering the chiefly macho culture of Uruguay, the allocation of the two candidates in the picture can be understood as a response to Lacalle Pou challenge. In line with Bourdieu (2001) analysis of sexuality and identification masculine genitals with power and body submissions in the Latin culture, the position of the FA candidate may be thought as a dominant position in a relation to the National Party Candidate who is unable to sustain his masculinity and subjugated

¹¹³ The Argentine version of this programme, regular repeated by a Uruguayan TV channel, sometimes included what is locally considered as highly erotic performances. The programme has been fined in the past for nudity and sexual references by the local authorities in charge of monitoring evaluating audio-visual content. They understood that the programme included inappropriate elements in performances broadcasted on an open TV channel at family time (La Nación, 2016; La Voz, 2011).

by giving his back to FA candidate. The post was considered inappropriate, denounced and removed immediately after its publication.

On these Groups, the distinction between social enhancement and campaigning became blurred and mixed in a variety of forms and levels of involvement. The loose characteristic of participation in *productive publics* became a source of disappointed for some users such as Jimena, Ciudadana or Lenina who desired more political analysis and commitment from users. Jimena commented on these types of posts in a sympathetic way by saying “I understand them. People need to steam out their frustrations and relaxing. Some of them do from their living-rooms with their own manners and without barriers [social norms and self-moderation]” (interview, 2014).

Figure 23: Modified picture of an erotic TV show with the faces of Vázquez and Lacalle Pou grabbing a pole dance.



Source: Facebook post notification received by personal email on 25 September 2014.

The use of the images from popular TV programmes may be understood as part of medium with a high permeability from other media (Wilson et. al., 2012, boyd, 2013, Miller et al. 2016) that allows users to transform and reuse content in different and new ways. The above image from *Dancing for a Dream* or the one from *CQC*, described in the second section of chapter Five, resonated with an audience who already knew these TV programmes. In line with Miller and Slater's (2000) analysis, the use of internet needs to be considered as embedded in a specific cultural that is nurtured with common references and codes provided

and re-signified in a local context and history. Not only was Facebook activity informed by a local culture shared by the public, but it also allowed users to modify and add their own reinterpretations and re-significations. These affordances provided users with the possibility to express their own views and magnify existing codes that create tensions and were considered unrefined or gross by some users.

Section 3 - Framing a productive public in an Open Group: *A negotiation and demarcation of multiple views for participation.*

This section considers Goffman's (1986) conceptualisation of frames as a useful tool to analyse the observed tensions and how participation was possible on pages including multiple values and criteria for action. Jimena, Arturo and other administrators voluntarily worked hard to find the way to keep the group as a meaningful space for the FA community and they had to justify their decisions made in the moderation of Pages. By following Tkacz (2015, p49), a frame could be understood as the basic principle that allowed users to gather and as the basis for this *productive publics*. Users required frames with general rules, and a goal that structured principles for the valuation of interventions. These basic principles provided the means whereby the *collective identity* of the FA could be materialised on those pages and brought together diverse users into a shared space.

Frames require the active involvement of users to make distinctions and boundaries for participation, and Facebook facilitated this process by providing administrators with the possibility of expelling users or removing post from the Wall. However, administrators also had to justify these boundary-making-decisions and were required to apply a specific *frame for action* (a redundant clarification in Goffman's (1986) conceptualisation) with which they could specify the terms for participating on the Group. Boundaries between the opposition – the other, undesired users – and the members of the FA were clearly observed in the Group and can be considered as minimum base for establishing a *collective identity*. In line with Melucci (1995a); Milan (2014) and Tkacz (2013), boundaries may be thought as organising devices of a medium that demarks the group and allows the specification of rules of what type of behaviour and content is allowed or not. These rules were often remembered and mainly, but not only, exercised by administrators who

followed the personalisation of an ACV dynamic to define and curate the terms for the *public* participation. The post quoted above “PLEASE PUT [USER’S NAME] OR WHOEVER IS ON A LEASH (...) IF I WANT TO SEE PORN, I GET INSIDE A CINEMA ON COLONIA STREET (...) I BELIEVE THAT THIS PAGE IS NOT FOR THAT” does not say that pornography was wrong, but that it was out of context and sending an inappropriate message for the Group. Similarly, to upload US President Donald Trump inauguration speech on a porn site (Lazzaro, 2017; Powell, 2017) may have been thought of as a subversive political message and made laughed to some people, but consumers of pornographic material might have not been happy to find FA publicity about the last governments’ achievements on a porn site. Similarly, the use of an onomatopoeia for laughing, Jaja, that accompanied the post with the picture of Lacalle Pou and Tábarez (figure 23) may be understood as a frame ‘keying’ that did not work well in communicating the ludic intentions of a user. By following Goffman’s (1986, p44) frame analysis, the use of ‘Jaja’ (the Spanish version of haha) may be understood as a specific framing operation that suggested the image as a joke, not to be taken seriously. For some users these types of posts were regarded as jokes and shared with the group as a form of entertainment, but others, including Jimena, María or Ciudadana considered them as damaging interventions for the campaign and the possibility of creating good spaces for political participation and discussions. To make the decision of removing this type of posts, administrators focused on what they described as lack of basic moral and ethical standards (Maria, interview, 2014; Jimena, interview, 2014).

Discussions about users’ behaviours and posts were common among users and administrators. To delete a post from the Wall could trigger a strong reaction from users who considered this as an authoritarian decision lacking appreciation for others’ views and a violation of their right to participate in a Group. And, before removing a post, Jimena considered important to explain to members what issues were. These conversations could form part of long discussions on Facebook Messenger, only available to the users included in the chat window. And, in most cases, the rest of the public did not notice the final result that usually ended with the removal of the problematic content (Jimena, interview, 2014). However, as part of Facebook multiple levels of scalability (Miller et al., 2016), these conversations and the information could also travel to the Wall of Group and became public. This type of action call into question the possibility of privacy on the public character of any issues discussed on Facebook.

The post below from the Wall of Frente Amplio, Uruguay shows how actions were taken after strong exchange of opinions between Group member and it was re-issued after intervention of one of the Group administrators.

Figure 24: Conversation about a quarrel among FA supporters

User name
Ya elimine todos los comentarios a pedido del compañero **Leandro**
See translation
Like · Share · 8 January at 20:20
8 people like this.

Leandro DEJADA LA BRANCA DE LADOi esperamos tus aportes positivos y gracias por haber entendido, saludos compa
8 January at 20:26 · Like · 1

User2 name ¡ PERO QUÉ HA PASADO CASI UN DÍA SIN ENTRAR AL FACE Y ME ENCUENTRO CON LAS PÁGINAS DEL FA CON PROBLEMASES CUANDO MAS UNIDOS TENEMOS QUE ESTAR
9 January at 01:53 · Like · 1

User3 name ??????????????
9 January at 02:12 · Like

User4 name Post's author: ME MANDA MENSAJES EN PRIVADO HABLANDO MAL DE User name NO LO HAGAS MAS. TE LO DIGO PUBLICAMENTE. TODOS SOMOS DEL FRENTE, HAY QUE ATACAR A LOS ROSADOS. Y ME ENTERE DE QUE SOS UN PERFIL FALSO, QUE SOS BLANCO, QUE ESTAS PPARA ATACAR, SI ES CIERTO DALE AHORA DECÍLO, POR FAVOR
9 January at 02:13 · Like

User3 name ES COMO PEDIRLE PERAS AL OLMO!!! ELIMINALO COMPANERA CON "PERSONAS" ASI MAS VALEQUE ESTEN LEJOS...
9 January at 02:16 · Like · 1

User4 name PERO ESTA EN ESTE GRUPO. Y DICE QUE LO ATACAN. NO ESTOY ENTENDIENDO NADA. NO NOS PELEEMOS ENTRE NOSOTROS
9 January at 02:18 · Like · 1

Translations:
I already deleted all the comments at the request of fellow Leandro
LEAVE THE ANGRY ASIDEi we look forward to received your positive contributions and thanks for understanding, greetings fella
WHAT HAS HAPPENED [?] ALMOST A DAY WITHOUT ENTERING FACE THE FACE AND I FOUND THE FA WITH PROBLEMS IT IS WHEN WE NEED TO BE UNITED THE MOST
[POST AUTHOR] SENDS ME MESSAGES IN PRIVATE SPEAKING BADDLY ABOUT [USER'S NAME]. DO NOT DO IT ANYMORE. I SAY IT TO YOU PUBLICLY. WE ARE ALL FROM THE FRONT, WE SHALL ATTACK THE PINK ONES. AND I HEARD THAT YOU ARE A FAKE PROFILE, THAT YOU ARE A WHITE, HERE TO ATTACK, IF IT IS TRUE COME ON NOW SAY IT, PLEASE
IT IS ASKING A PEAR TO AN ELM!!! ELIMINATE HIM FELLOW [.] THIS KIND OF "PEOPLE" ARE BETTER FAR AWAY...
BUT HE IS IN THIS GROUP. AND SAYS THAT HE IS ATTACKED. I AM NOT UNDERSTANDING ANYTHING. LET'S NOT FIGHT BETWEEN US.

Source: www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/. Translation conducted by the author.

Different opinions about the government policies generated a quarrel with strong language and personal attacks among some users on Frente Amplio, Uruguay. This could be initially thought of being an irreconcilable dispute after the participants began levelling personal accusations. One of the members asked for the expulsion of a user who was described as breaking basic Group's norms. The user was also accused of being a White (National Party supporter), who was against the government and entered the group to create problems. The accusing members were not administrators and could not have expelled the user or removed the comments. So, the conflict between the parts triggered a series of arguments which can be considered in line with Tkacz's (2015) analysis of disputes over a participatory forms of content production. Here, the analysis of posts also suggests that a debate required having different parties who recognise their own frames as the right form to interpret a situation and establishing the appropriate actions to be taken. The statements used by members aimed at ordering the situation and make a classification on what was

right and wrong in relation to the rules or frame of the Group. The value of such arguments could only be appreciated in relation to a specific frame with which a valuation of the situation was possible.

Leandro, one of the Group administrators, intervened and called for the unity of the Group in the name of the general interest of the public. The risk of reducing public support by expelling a member who was a Frenteamplistas needed to be considered (Arturo, interview, 2014), and a solution for the quarrel required a common frame and someone who could enact it with authority. As an administrator, Leandro communicated directly with the user and provided a series of arguments regarding the types of comments allowed on the group. The justification of actions required arguments that could be recognised by the different parts and restate the frame with which everyone could agree to continue in the group. The dispute among the different parties could be resolved by mentioning higher principles that were above the previous statements and recognised as a valid frame for understanding the situation. Otherwise, the administrator decision could be thought of as arbitrary and delegitimise the activities on the Group and prevent further participations. The inappropriate language and comments were deleted upon Leandro's request and the members stayed in the Group within a frame based on the electoral circumstances and the main interest of reaching a lasting unity. On this Group a basic frame for participation could be based on three main principles: 1) to strengthen and support the FA, 2) generate an alternative space for participation outside the formal parties' hierarchical, and 3) develop debates and discussions. By resolving this conflict, the *frame* and *collective identity* of the Group was strengthened and restated.

A similar situation also happened in a discussion on freedom of speech in which Jimena was involved. The removal of content with insults to the opposition generated tensions among users. Some of them understood the Group as a free space where any type of language or message could be said. But, Jimena and Maria considered that insults could not be accepted and knew that this repelled "middle class and well-educated supporters" (Jimena, interview, 2014). Jimena in her role of administrator considered different levels on which the value of the Group could be evaluated. Moral and ethical standards against the use of sexual explicit content and insults were also part of basic rules to participate on these groups. She understood that the campaign needed to have basic ethical and moral rules to include everyone in a respectful space for

participating together. If this may have sounded reasonable, the principle of freedom speech was also a strong argument that demanded a response. Jimena (interview, 2014) empathically said to the Group: “Yes, in this page there is censorship. Do you want swearwords? Create your own page!” Some users and administrators considered that Jimena needed to be more flexible, but she insisted on the importance of the limits of freedom of speech. “Otherwise, what is freedom of speech? Viva the torturers is part of the freedom of speech. No. I don’t believe in freedom of speech. One has a guideline.”

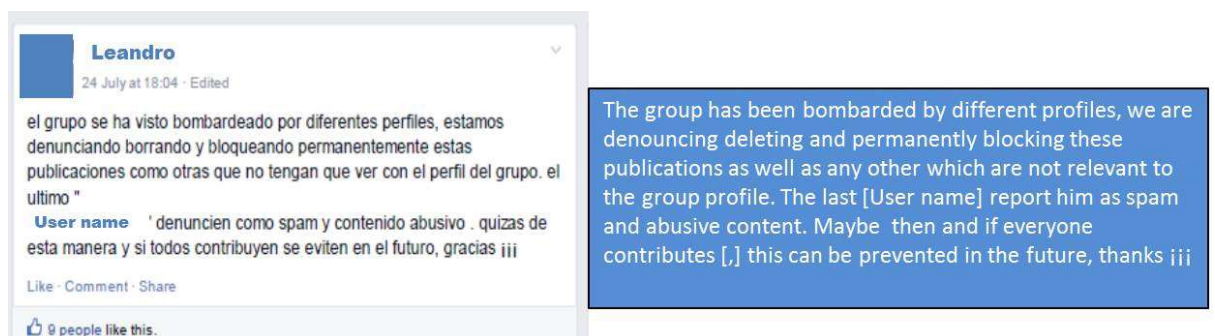
The Group established a disciplinary process over its members, which was sometimes clearly demarcated by intimidatory language and accusations regarding the identity of the users being questioned. A user posting critiques or inappropriate content was usually accused of being a political competitor trying to create problems. However, it is also important to notice that insults were sometimes tolerated as part of a flexible frame that considered public support to the FA as the main goal of the Group. If a user insulting the FA was quickly excluded from the Group without minimal hesitation, it is also true that insults against the opposition – such as the CQC image on figure 13 – could be tolerated.

Frames were made and reaffirmed in constant conversations with the administrators and became a guide to justify authoritative decisions made on the value of interventions. The three aforementioned components included in a frame for participation needed to be understood as part of a process of negotiations among users. The mood of the people and the feeling of the potential threats from the opposition played against the possibility of having internal debates on the decisions taken by the FA leaders. Critics and those disagreeing or showing alternative views towards the FA candidates or party policies were not tolerated on Frente Amplio, Uruguay, which had a frame for acting that differed from the ideal spaces for democratic debates imagined by some users. The possibility of a dialogue and political debate on the Group was a hardly realised. Ciudadana’s post mentioned in the epigraph did not generated any enthusiasm despite the intellectual work put on her analysis. Pedro (interview, 2014) said: “I finally left the group because there was no space to think differently”. This view was also shared by Jimena who also left the Group several months after the elections. She wanted to have deep political analysis and conversations with other members, but she also recognised that “very few people were able to do a real political evaluation. There is no self-critique.

You cannot say anything because they eat you alive” (Jimena, interview, 2014). In line with Kavada’s (2015) study of the Facebook pages, direct democracy and open participation were understood as a desirable, but these principles found limitations in the practice. Openness may be considered as a moral value associated with a democratic image with which FA supporters identified themselves and used by them to think on themselves as embedded with a positive moral quality. But, debates were limited, and the Groups mainly reinforced the electoral goal that might be described as *echo chambers* that reproduce one main political tune without real possibilities for exchanging ideas.

However, the interventions on the Group can also be understood as form of users’ empowerment in which they shared information and made amendments and collaboration for building up a space where their subjectivity could arrive to a common criterion for participation. The post below was generated by Leandro who called supporters to act together to defend the space from alien users who were constantly attacking the goal of Group and the FA community. To remove undesired information was part of a collective action that reinforced the process of identification with the FA. In line with the definition of ACV, users were responsible for the content posted on a page and they had the chance to define what types of topics and treatments were allowed and relevant for page. To have insults, commercial advertisement or content undermining the FA campaign was not useful or valuable for any of the sites analysed. Value was only created when a network of users reached consensus and aligned with a frame materialised in the publications and statements posted on the Wall.

Figure 22: Administrator asking to all members to police and denounce inappropriate interventions on the group



Source: www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/. Translation conducted by the author.

In the post above Leandro chose the word 'profiles' to talk about undesirable interventions and explained that maintaining an open and inclusive policy of participation required constant surveillance on the Walls of Group members associated with FA supporters. This could be achieved by a collective action that may be conceptualised as *participatory surveillance* (Albrechtslund, 2008, p6-7) carried out by supporter of the FA who could contribute to maintain the goals of the Groups by denouncing and eliminating these undesired spams, links to viruses, political provocateurs and aggressors. A *participatory surveillance* requires users' interventions to monitor other users in a process that redefines the frame and content that was relevant for the public on a specific page. Facebook provides administrators with different rights to make changes and decisions on content that are in line with the definition of ACV in which pages were appropriated by certain accounts and contributions made by other users as a *productive public*, who could also denounce inappropriate behaviour and establishing what type of participation was valuable for the Group.

Conclusions

The affordances of Open Groups were aligned with the attempt for materialising democratic principles of inclusiveness, openness and freedom of speech considered by FA supporters as desirable values. However, the chapter observed clear differentiations between a minority who actively generated content and took control of the Groups and those who were silent and marginalised from an active participation. Similarly, the chapter suggested that the Facebook did not necessary generate more democratic forms of participation but spaces where pre-existent political identifications and goals established by a few users were reinforced by the contributions of a productive publics who agreed with the implementations of frames that limited critique and discussions and focused on building self-stem and online enthusiasm by echoing supportive messages.

The chapter also showed how the creation of value on Facebook is associated to users' capacity to build a frame for interacting together on one page. These Groups were created to support a specific cause

associated to the FA, and the value of these pages was based on their capacity to bring contributions and support from a public constantly measured by Facebook affordances. The open and visible quantification of members contributed to the translation of users' interactions as value in a dynamic based on accounts and managed pages. The frame for the creation of value can be considered as a key characteristic of *Account Centre Value* dynamics developed around the users' capacity to use the space for certain goals and generate value by centralising the public attention and support. In line with Gerlitz and Helmond (2013), Facebook facilitates positive reactions through social buttons, but these spaces also enacted frames which only allow certain type of posts and comments constantly monitored by users.

The more popular these Groups were, the more value these pages had. However, value required the users' capacity to distinguishing useful contributions from inappropriate interventions in frames for acting within a political group. Open Facebook Group were subject to the users' loose interpretation of the frame for acting and required constants efforts and lateral surveillance on users' interventions to follow the users' interventions and enact the frames. This process of making the frames required take ownership of a page and statements to justify actions and support decision associated with socio-technical capacity to enact rules, boundaries and valuations on users' interventions.

The tensions around the decision on controversial content facilitated the researcher's aim of deconstructing the process thereby a field of action, interests and a meaningful participation could be established. In the case of Frente Amplio, Uruguay the boundaries were much more rigid than in For a Frente Amplio Closer to the People. Inclusiveness, freedom of speech and equal rights for participation were not pre-given, but the result of specific practices and actions enacted by the users in specific framed spaces. Limitations to a freedom of speech were applied, and ideal democratic values of openness, horizontality and clashed with the goals of electoral competition and Pages that capitalised users' attention.

The chapter observed a tension between the needs of increasing public support and what can be described as the users' multiple private ethical horizons for participation. The emergence of those tensions may be summarised in two ways, which reflect the dynamic of campaigning on Facebook. On the one hand, there was a political need to communicate a message beyond the Groups and gain new supporters. Catching the

attention of an external audience presupposed being public and open to increase the number of members as a sign of growing public support. On the other hand, the users' ability to produce content independently created expectations for participation that were not accomplished by the actual interventions on the Groups' Wall. The people's understanding of Facebook as a space where everything could be said did not meet the frames established by administrators and the core group of users on these Pages. The first issue was related to the aim of increasing public support measured in quantitative terms and the impossibility of controlling the quality of interventions independently created by users. Similarly, the policy of including more and more people opened the doors to unknown users who could be part of the opposition or not interested in contributing with common goal of these Groups. Secondly, most supporters considered positive comments and posts as the only possible form of adding value to the campaign. This prevented the possibility of a self-critique and what Ciudadana, Pedro or Lenina would have considered a deeper analysis and valuable forms of collaboration with the Groups.

The chapter also observed ambiguity in the discourse of some administrators such as Jimena who complained about the lack of self-reflexion and self-critique inside the Facebook Group, but censored posts that critically evaluate decisions in the internal presidential election of Vázquez. This was justified by the consensus and enactment of a frame that considered winning the elections in the first instance and the need of having cohesion and strengthening the political coalition in the context of a national election that already established a competition in a broader culture that established success as the ultimate goal and priority and defeating the opponent as the legitimate actions.

The chapter also observed the creation of asymmetries that were enacted by multiple agencies. Metrics had a performative effect on users and generate enthusiasm that trigger more support and attracted user to more popular Groups. Administrators also produced distinctions and asymmetries in the possibilities of participating and positing contents. These administrative rights were also supported by the platform that provided a series of mechanism to eliminate Pages and content. This reinforced the personalisation and appropriation of pages managed from specific accounts that could claim ownership of the space where *productive publics* could be based.

Conclusions

To understand how Facebook became a valuable space for users involved in the 2014 Uruguayan national elections, this thesis explored the interactions between users on pages dedicated to the FA. The creation of value was found to be a result of processes that involved rational components and the possibility of making calculations and users' subjectivity with specific views embedded in a local culture and particular goals. These components were part of the specific practices and culture that this research considered necessary to study for understanding participation on Facebook during a political campaign. The decision to conduct an ethnographic approach was related to the importance of understanding the users' subjectivities in the appropriation of Facebook as a meaningful space for participation in a specific context. Not only did pages become valuable for supporters because they were the online spaces of a political group, but they also became meaningful because they were able to include users' contributions with specific cultural norms, taboos, jokes and local references such as, popular slogans, songs or TV programmes associated with emotions and memories.

The first chapter reviewed Facebook's features and the FA's rich political culture to show how they shaped users' interactions according to their specific circumstances and possibility of using the platform. Users understood participation on Facebook in relation to their education, affiliation to different political organisations and ideas for supporting the FA. The different views and values inside the FA were illustrated to provide an initial picture to understand the roots of some tensions and disagreements that were facilitated by the low threshold level to participation on Facebook and the massive and deeply embedded use of this platform in the Uruguayan society.

The thesis proposed that the use of Facebook needed to be understood as part of the general existing culture in which competition and the search for progress and success were naturalised as part of the interactions in electoral races. To analyse the production of value around users' shared interests, the definition of *productive publics* (Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013) was considered in relation to the specificities of a national election and Facebook devices to measure the public's reactions on all kinds of pages on a constant basis. This research showed that a growing number of public responses was associated with the

idea of progress and was used to justify the practices of campaigners and spread enthusiasm among supporters. Similarly, the term *audit culture* was considered useful to understand the actions of campaigners who were interested in monitoring the public and the possibility of generating support to achieve electoral goals. This thesis suggested that Facebook contributes to the development of an *audit culture* in which the position of campaigners and their electoral progress could be measured to evaluate activities in terms of efficiency and success. This term could be also aligned with the idea of *worth in an industrial world* (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006) in which competition, planning activities based on the evidence and the creation of indicators to measure efficacy is part of a widely shared culture. Facebook's indicators facilitated valuations based on the possibility of tailoring pages to specific interests and rules for participation.

The analysis of how Facebook metrics affected user's interactions was a crucial component of this thesis. Metrics were considered as *mediators* with performative effects on the actors involved and the valuation of public participation. Similarly, they triggered reflexivity among online managers and users who were part of looped processes in which indicators feed activities on pages. They were included in processes that ordered and hierarchised digital contents and accounts that produced distinctions and elicited actions. The decisions as to whether or not to promote content via paid advertising was informed by comparative analysis on the number of Likes achieved by the FA and the competition. Similarly, this study observed that more popular pages tended to increase their number of users at faster pace than less popular pages, and users decided to participate in one Group or another by looking at the numbers of members.

These key concepts - developed in the academic debate on valuations and digital technologies - were included in three analytical chapters. The first of these - chapter four- focused on the idea of Facebook as a multivalent platform and put forward the concept of *Account Centred Value* (ACV) to understand a dynamic of value production that considered the various interests of diverse users interacting with and on *productive publics*. Chapter five introduced a small change in the focus of analysis to address the performative capacity of metrics in the actions of users. This change was required to recognise the agency of the medium in the valuation process that the thesis also acknowledges, and the term ACV dynamic on Facebook paid especial attention to metrification and quantification capacities of the platform to allow the recognition of value. The

chapter used the term *audit culture* to conceptualise the activities of the FA National Commission and described the collective process whereby metrics translated and transformed users' participations into indicators of public support that then, in turn, had performative effects on the public and the campaign. Chapter six continued the analysis of *audit culture* on Facebook Groups, but focused on conflicts between users and the processes to establish agreements and justifying coercive actions on posts and page memberships. Here, the notion of *frames* (Goffman, 1986) was included in the analysis to understand how the meaning of actions and their value was constructed.

The thesis showed that Facebook worked as an organiser with performative effects on peoples' activities, but it was also a platform for different forms of participation related to users' aims and activities framed in a specific context and culture. Facebook was considered as a complex set of technologies that offered multiple means for communication and interaction among a network of users (Fuchs, 2014). Fan Pages and Groups offered variations in the platform's affordances for fostering certain types of interactions. The analysis of these two different types of pages was provided separately in chapter five and six to show the enactment of diverse forms of participation. The personalisation of accounts in relation to certain frames for action was also considered as socio-technical practices that become valuable as a result of the ability to re-escalate and re-signify participation.

Fan Pages proved to be easier to manage by a more centralised form of campaign in which administrators have more control of content production and could develop an expansive strategy aimed at reaching a large number of supporters. Conversely, Open Group pages showed a more horizontal form of content and value production. They generated a space where clashes between different criteria for understanding participation was more likely to occur. As a result, the management of popular Open Groups in the context of a national election proved to be very demanding for their administrators.

The findings of this thesis around the analysis of value created by the public's participation on Facebook can be summarised in five main points. Their analysis may be useful for improving the understanding other political initiatives aimed at catching users' attentions and online engagement. By following the practices of diverse actors involved in political pages, the thesis observed multiple forms of value associated with

multiple interests and practices that was conceptualised as the *multivalence* of digital platforms. A second point was connected with the coexistence of a dynamic of collaboration and competition among accounts for obtaining the users' attention and engagement that the thesis described as *Account Centred Value* (ACV) dynamic. This concept helped to describe a third point that addresses the need to build a frame for establishing the value of the public's participation. The possibility of making Facebook a valuable space for political participation required agreement as to the appropriateness of actions and rules for pursuing a specific goal. The frames for actions used by campaigners were included in the definition of ACV that considered value creation as part of the users' abilities to personalise pages and define topics to be shared with a network of users who could add value by engaging with them and supporting pages. A fourth point was related to Facebook' constant metrification of interactions and the possibility of lay forms of valuations of public issues based the users' own criteria that was defined as a *popularisation of audit culture*. A fifth point was associated with the result of those valuations and the competition and centralisation of users' support and attention. The creation of rankings and differences among accounts led to asymmetries around the actors' capacity to gain attention and support that were fostered by Facebook's affordances such as paid promotion of content and the use of authentication processes to denounce and ban pages.

Important contributions around these five findings came from the possibility of observing the tensions among actors who coexisted, cooperated and clashed in the establishment of frames for action on Facebook pages. The term *collective identity* helped to analyse these various positions and tensions as part of an open process of negotiation to achieve and establish common goals based on left-wing ideas and opposing right-wing parties. The multiple forms of value enacted by users' different practices and resignifications of Facebook required negotiations around a common frame that maintained unity and shared goals that supporters could adopt as part of their personal identity and claim for themselves.

The creation of value was understood as part of a process that required the entanglement of different actors who have their own interests in using Facebook. Party supporters, external consultants, party officers, journalists, non-supporters and politicians brought and blended their own agencies in their interactions with *productive publics*. Valuation processes were not the direct result of Facebook's metrics, but were enacted

by the association of multiple and distributed agencies that transformed, re-signified and validated metrics in relation to certain goals pursued by different actors inside and outside the FA. Chapter five worked on the conceptualisation of *productive publics* and *audit culture* in the FA to understand the use of metrics by the National Commission. Political consultants and campaign managers worked with the metrics provided by Facebook and co-created by public participation. They included Facebook's indicators in systematic analysis that they believed it was required to frame the campaign as part of the professional activities in which evidence and audits were considered to be necessary for making decisions. They demarcated boundaries in their agencies and ownership of specific tasks and objects for intervening in the process of value production. These separations, re-appropriation and re-signification of different tasks allowed the use of metrics as *reality tests* that were defined as neutral indicators for the valuation of activities in relation to specific goals. Metrics were required for making sense of the campaign, but they also needed to be circulated and negotiated with the rest of party and external actors to be accepted as useful for valuation and decision-making processes. The reports created by external consultants helped to generate a convention around metrics for conducting valuations of the campaign effectiveness.

The analysis of the different experiences on Facebook and their conceptualisation as ACV showed that the recognition and production of value was related to the platform's capacity to create spaces that invited the support of other users in the broader network of Facebook. Pages measured interactions for different levels of participation and frames for action associated with the users' own references and ideas of what a meaningful and successful page was. Not only were metrics included in professional reports, but they were also considered in informal valuation as part of everyday interactions on Facebook. This allowed a *popularisation of audit culture* created by the ability of users to access metrics and establish frames for making valuation of the Pages and issues considered relevant by them.

The term ACV was developed to recognise the role of users' activities in relation to the possibility of claiming ownership of accounts and adding value generated by the contributions of a network of users. However, it is necessary to mention that ACV does not put an excessive emphasis in users' capacity to manage an account. The possibility of generating responses from users is related to multiple separate agencies that

cannot be controlled by a single actor. Having said this, the thesis also considers that the interests and goals proposed by users on their accounts are required to initiate a process of value creation that depends on the interventions and contributions of a public.

The analysis of a dynamic of collaboration and competition for attention on Facebook showed that valuations were also part of a process of settling tensions among different actors (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1999; Dewey, 1939, p55). These processes generate differentiations and asymmetries among the intervening actors. Metrics could be used as *reality tests* in these valuations and had performative effects in reinforcing asymmetries in the capacity of gathering a public and their support. The status of actors already better positioned to obtain and centralise the public attention and support was confirmed and strengthened by the possibility of eliciting more support than other accounts.

The numbers of Likes, Shares or Comments were not considered in a vacuum as an abstract arithmetical operation, but as part of a frame that proposed an electoral goal and included moral and ethical standards, political ideas and certain logic for actions. Similarly, valuation of productive publics had rational and irrational components. On the one hand, campaigners and supporters made decisions and articulated discourses in which Facebook was considered as a tool for reaching people and gaining support for the party's electoral goals. But, on the other hand, participation on Facebook was also connected to emotions that were crucial components of people's identification with the FA and the basis for their motivations to participate in the campaign. In line with Melucci's (1995a) analysis of identity, the actions of Frenteampelistas on Facebook had non-negotiable components that established hard boundaries for their collective actions. And, the analysis of the resolution of conflicts showed that participation on the study pages mainly led to the reinforcement of pre-defined values and goals suggested by administrators. The conflict around the unofficial Fan Page Tabaré 2014 and the threat of closing down the Group Frente Amplio, Uruguay showed limits to the effects of the participation of users and the appropriation of content and pages that implied power relationship and asymmetries in the use of Facebook.

In a country with high levels of political participation and interest, Facebook provided users with an alternative space for debating and participating. But, the analysis of tensions around appropriation of

identities and catching the public attention as part of an ACV dynamic showed limited possibilities in the creation of democratic debates and exchanges of alternative ideas. Alongside the party official Fan page there were many alternative pages for the independent action of supporters who expressed their views and participated on their own terms. FA supporters interested in developing an alternative political space were able to gather on Facebook and the figure of Constanza Moreira to articulate their political views and goals in a coherent proposal. Facebook may have worked as a political hub for people who shared common political goal and could facilitated the creation a new political project, but it was also used by party officer with the aim of centralising attention and try to neutralise competitors and alternative voices. The moderation of the administrators and the users' denouncement of inappropriate interventions could be considered as a form of *participatory surveillance* (Albrechtslund, 2008) and to be required to establish a frame and consensus and basic norms for participation and collaboration. But, Facebook also facilitated a dynamic of personalisation and appropriation of spaces that could enforce and mould participation in alignment with the criteria of administrators and organisations.

Further research interests: *Possibilities and limitations.*

It is hoped that the analysis elaborated in this research might inspire scholars and practitioners interested in developing online political campaigns to conduct further research on the possibility of widening political engagement. The approach followed in this thesis suggests that any future study will benefit from in-depth study of the specific cultures and codes used by the public involved with political issues in other cultural scenarios. The thesis provided analytical tools which may contribute to future research on online political participation. But, in line with Miller et al. (2016), the thesis recognizes that the Uruguayan use of Facebook may significantly differ from the use of digital media used in different cultural backgrounds. Similarly, the possibility of understanding the influence Facebook has on political systems may require other types of analysis that can study the distribution of content among the whole network of users and the actual role of content in the modification of voters' attitudes at a national scale. But, the analysis provided by this thesis outlines some the effects of the use of Facebook to distribute information and elicit political participation and raises the question as to whether Facebook may be considered as perfect marketing tool based on the

possibility of controlling content circulation and the fallacy of openness equal opportunities to access that information.

Certainly, Facebook provides content visibility as a core business service and by doing so it allows users to pay for increasing the possibility of catching attention and interaction with users. Facebook creates a system in which numbers displayed by metrics are not the users' ability to catch attention and generate responses, but their capacity to buy it. However, while these indicators were portrayed as objective and neutral manifestations of the public support and used as evidence of public support in self-appraisal exercises, administrators were not able to translate the number of fans and group members into evidence for electoral results, but as indicators of successful practices. If the possibility of obtaining more fans and support may be associated with the idea of political progress, the control of content circulation and the capacity of obtaining more responses and a successful campaign was already guaranteed by Facebook commercial policy of restricting and increasing content circulation.

Further research and data would be required to analyse those political activities and media policies that have put Facebook at the centre of a debate the possibility of influencing elections and democracy. But, the ACV is put forward here as a useful concept for future studies in relation to other phenomena such as the recent scandal around Cambridge Analytica and the use of fake news to attack opponents and manipulate voters. It can be used to show the simplification of some analysis on Facebook and reflect on the logic of studies that propose the zeitgeist of populism (Mudde, 2004) and a corresponding increase in online populism (Engesser et al., 2016; 2017). Previous studies have sometimes ignored the active agency of users who contribute to the circulation of content based on their own perceptions and interests. While the thesis has shown that the affordances of Facebook provide campaign managers with useful resources for political communication, it has considered that users may have multiple and even contradictory reasons to support an account. They actively consider information and use Facebook according to their own interests and ideas and are not always easily deceived.

References

- Achugar, M., Fernández, A. and Morales, N. (2014) La dictadura uruguaya en la cultura popular: recontextualizaciones de “A redoblar”. *Discurso & Sociedad* (8), pp83-108.
- Adam, B. (1998) *Timescapes of modernity*. Routledge, London.
- Adkins, L. and Lury, C. (2012) Introduction: special measures. *The Sociological Review* (59) (s2), pp5-23. Wiley Online Library. Available online on <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/1467954x/59/s2>. Last accessed on 3 July 2018.
- Aguiar, S. (2012) Movimientos Sociales Juveniles En Uruguay: Situación En Las Últimas Décadas Y Escenarios Prospectivos. *Revista de Ciencias Sociales*. (3) pp38-66. Universidad Católica del Uruguay, Montevideo.
- Arditi, B. (2004) Populism as a Spectre of Democracy: A Response to Canovan. *Political Studies* (52), pp135–143. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.
- Atkin, C. and Rice, R. (2013) Advance in public campaigns. In E Scharrer (Ed.), *The international encyclopaedia of mass media studies*: (5) Media effects/Media psychology, pp526-551. Wiley Blackwell, London.
- Atkinson, P. and Hammersley, M. (1994) Ethnography and participant observation. In Denzin, N. and Lincoln, S. *Handbook of qualitative research*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp248–61.
- Agre, P. (1994) Surveillance and capture: Two models of privacy. *The Information Society* 10(2), 101-127.
- Albrechtslund, A. (2008) Online social networking as participatory surveillance. *First Monday* 13 (3).

American Majority (2013) Facebook A BEGINNER'S GUIDE. https://americanmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/American_Majority_Facebook_Manual.pdf.

Arvidsson, A. (2004) On the 'Pre-History of The Panoptic Sort': Mobility in Market Research. *Surveillance & Society* 1(4).

Arvidsson, A. (2006) *Brands: Meaning and value in media culture*. Routledge. London

Arvidsson, A. (2012) General sentiment: How value and affect converge in the information economy. *The Sociological Review* 59(s2), pp39-59.

Arvidsson, A. and Peitersen, N. (2013) *The ethical economy: Rebuilding value after the crisis*. Columbia University Press.

Barnard, L. and Kreiss, D. (2013) A Research Agenda for Online Advertising: Surveying Campaign Practices, 2000-2012. *International Journal of Communication* 7 21.

Barta, K. and Neff, G. (2015) Technologies for Sharing: lessons from Quantified Self about the political economy of platforms, *Information, Communication & Society*, 19:4, pp518-531. Available online on <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/>. Last accessed on 17 February 2016.

Batorski, D. and Grzywińska, I. (2017): Three dimensions of the public sphere on Facebook, *Information, Communication & Society*. DOI:10.1080/1369118X.2017.1281329.

BBC (2018) Cambridge Analytica files spell out election tactics. BBC Technology Available online on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-43581892>. Last accessed on 13 April 2018.

BBC Mundo. (2014) Uruguay: presidentes de Argentina y Venezuela felicitan a Tabaré Vázquez por triunfo electoral. Available online on http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/ultimas_noticias/2014/12/141201_ulnnot_uruguay_reacciones_elecciones_tabare_vazquez_lv

Last accessed on 18 March 2015.

Beer, D. (2009) Power through the algorithm? Participatory web cultures and the technological unconscious. *New Media & Society* Vol.11 (6) pp985-1002.

Beer, D. (2016) How should we do the history of Big Data? *Big Data & Society* Vol 3 (1). SAGE Publications. Available online on <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951716646135>

Last accessed 25 May 2018.

Beer, D. and Burrows, R. (2007) Sociology and, of and in Web 2.0: Some Initial Considerations. *Sociological Research Online*. Available online on <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/12/5/17.html>. Last accessed on 10 October 2013.

Benkler, Y. (2006) *The wealth of networks: How social production transforms markets and freedom*. Yale University Press.

Benkler, Y., Faris, R., Roberts, H. and E. Zuckerman (2017) Breitbart-led right-wing media ecosystem altered broader media agenda. *Columbia Journalism Review*. Available online on <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/breitbart-media-trump-harvard-study.php>. Last accessed on 14 February 2018.

Bessy, C. and Chauvin, P-M. (2013) The power of market intermediaries: From information to valuation processes. *Valuation studies* 1(1), pp83-117.

Beitler, D. (2013) *National Programmes, Technical Projects: An ethnography of the One Laptop per Child (OLPC) programme in Uruguay*. Department of Sociology of the London School of Economics and Political Science, London.

Bennett, L. and Segerberg, A. (2012): THE LOGIC OF CONNECTIVE ACTION, *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(5), pp739-768.

Bennett, L., Segerberg, A. and Walker S. (2014) Organization in the crowd: peer production in large-scale networked protests, *Information, Communication & Society*, 17(2), pp232-260, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2013.870379.

Bianchi, C. (2013) Yo debato con cualquiera. Montevideo Portal, las 40. Available online on <http://www.montevideo.com.uy/auc.aspx?213644>. Last accessed on 14 February 2016.

Bimber, B. and Davis, R. (2003) *Campaigning online: The Internet in US elections*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Bobbio, N. (1984) The future of democracy. *Telos* 1984(61), pp3-16.

Boltanski, L. and Thévenot, L. (1999) The sociology of critical capacity. *European journal of social theory*, 2(3), pp359-377.

Boltanski, L. and Thévenot, L. (2006) *On justification: Economies of worth*. Princeton University Press.

Bottinelli, O. (2014) Intención de voto para el 26 de octubre. Available online on <http://factum.edu.uy/node/1634>. Last accessed on 23 October 2014.

Bourdieu, P. (2001) *Masculine Domination*. Stanford University Press.

boyd, D. (2003). Reflections on friendster, trust and intimacy. In *Intimate (Ubiquitous) Computing Workshop-Ubicomp* pp12-15.

boyd, d. (2010) "Social Network Sites as Networked Publics: Affordances, Dynamics, and Implications." In *Networked Self: Identity, Community, and Culture on Social Network Sites* (ed. Zizi Papacharissi), pp39-58.

boyd, d. and Crawford, K. (2011) Six provocations for big data, A Decade in Internet Time: Symposium on the Dynamics of the Internet and Society. Social Science Research Network, Oxford.

boyd, D.M. and Ellison, N.B. (2008) Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13(1),210–230.

Branaman, A. (1997) *The Goffman reader*. Blackwell, Oxford. Ppxlv-lxxxii.

Brauer, C. and Bernroider, E.W., 2015. Social Media Analytics with Facebook-The Case of Higher Education Institutions. In *HCI in Business*.3-12. Springer International Publishing.

Bruns, A. (2006) Towards produsage: Futures for user-led content production. In Sudweeks, Fay and Hrachovec, Herbert and Ess, Charles, Eds. *Proceedings Cultural Attitudes towards Communication and Technology 2006*, pages 275-284, Tartu.

Bruns, A. (2007a) Produsage. In *Proceedings of the 6th ACM SIGCHI conference on Creativity and cognition*. Washington, DC.

Bruns, A. (2007b) Methodologies for mapping the political blogosphere: An exploration using the IssueCrawler research tool. *First Monday* 12(5) Available online

<http://www.firstmonday.org/>

[issues/issue12_5/bruns/index.html](http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue12_5/bruns/index.html) Last accessed on 12 March 2015

Bruns, A. (2008) The future is user-led: The path towards widespread produsage. *Fibreculture journal*(11)

Brügger, N. (2015) A brief history of Facebook as a media text: The development of an empty structure. *First Monday*, Volume 20, Number 5 4. Available online on <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/rt/printerFriendly/5423/4466>. Last accessed on 1 June 2015.

Bustamante, M (2014) Casi el 60% de la publicidad electoral se destinará a la TV. La Republica Available online on <http://www.republica.com.uy/casi-el-60-de-la-publicidad-electoral-se-destinara-a-la-tv>. Last accessed on 1 Octubre 2014.

Caetano, G. (1989) La partidocracia uruguaya en busca de un espejo. Partidos, Estado y sociedad en el Río de la Plata (1890-1930). In Cuadernos del CLAEH. 50 pp71-92. Montevideo.

Caetano, G. (1992) Notas para una revisión histórica sobre la cuestión nacional en el Uruguay. Revista de História, 3 pp59-78, Neuquen.

Christensson, P. (2006) Permalink Definition. Retrieved 2016, Nov 13, from <http://techterms.com/definition/permalink> Last accessed on 13 November 2016.

Clark, J., Couldry, N. De Kosnik, A., Gillespie, T. Jenkins, H., Kelty, C., Papacharissi, Z., Powell, A. and van Dijck, J. (2014) Participations: Dialogues on the Participatory Promise of Contemporary Culture and Politics. International Journal of Communication 8, Forum pp1446–1473. Available online on http://zizi.people.uic.edu/Site/Research_files/ParticipationsIJOC.pdf. Last accessed on 20 April 2016.

Callon, M. (1990) Techno-economic networks and irreversibility. The Sociological Review 38 (S1), pp132-161.

Callon, M. (1998) An essay on framing and overflowing: economic externalities revisited by sociology. The Sociological Review. Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.244-269.

Callon, M., Méadel, C. and Rabeharisoa, V. (2002) The economy of qualities. Economy and society 31(2), pp194-217.

Campbell, D. (1957) Factors relevant to the validity of experiments in social settings. Psychological bulletin 54(4), pp297.

Carlisle, J. and Patton, R. (2013) Is *Social media* Changing How We Understand Political Engagement? An Analysis of Facebook and the 2008 Presidential Election. *Political Research Quarterly* 2013 66: 883. Sage Available online on <http://prq.sagepub.com/content/66/4/883>. Last accessed on March 3 2015.

Cassidy, J. (2006) Me media: How hanging out on the Internet became big business. *The New Yorker* 82 (13).

Castells, M. (1996) *The information age: economy, society and culture*. Vol. 1, *The rise of the network society*, vol. 1. Blackwell Oxford.

Castells, M. (2009) *Communication Power*. Oxford University Press, New York.

Castells, M. (2012) *Networks of outrage and hope – social movements in the Internet age*. Wiley. Chichester.

Chasqueti, D. and Buquet, D. (2004) *La democracia en Uruguay: una partidocracia de consenso*. Política. (42) pp221-247. Universidad de Chile. Santiago de Chile.

Chan, K. (2009a) "I like this". Available online on <https://www.facebook.com/notes/facebook/likethis/53024537130/>. Last accessed on 22 June, 2017.

Chan, K. (2009b) *Keeping Count of Sharing Across the Web*. Available online on <https://www.facebook.com/notes/facebook/keepingcountofsharingacrosstheweb/165161437130/>. Last accessed on 22 June, 2017.

Corte Electoral (2014a) Plan Circular. ACTA N°9409. Available online on <http://www.corteelectoral.gub.uy/gxpsites/page.aspx?3,26,446>. Last accessed on 22 October, 2014.

Corte Electoral (2014b) *Sumatoria provisoria de los resultados de los escrutinios primarios de las comisiones receptoras de votos*. Available online on

<http://eleccionesnacionales2014.corteelectoral.gub.uy/>. Last accessed on 28 October 2014.

Corte Electoral (2014c) ACTA N°9409. Available online on http://www.corteelectoral.gub.uy/nacionales2014/proclamacion/ACTA_9409_ELECCIONES_NACIONALES_2014_OCTUBRE.pdf. Last accessed on 3 September 2016.

Cortea, D. and Hoynes, W. (2003) Media Society-Industries, Images, and Audiences. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Crawford, K. and Gillespie, T. (2014) What is a flag for? Social media reporting tools and the vocabulary of complaint. New Media and Society. Sage.

Cohen, L. (2014) Uso político de redes sociales puede convertirse en bumerán. El País.

Cohen, C., Kahne, J., Bowyer, B., Middaugh, E. and Rogowski, J. (2011) Participatory politics. MacArthur Foundation.

D'Alesandro, F. (1994) Historia de la izquierda Uruguaya. Anarquistas y Socialistas 1838-1910. Tomo 1. Editorial Carlos Alvares, Montevideo.

Davis, A. (2010) Political Communication and Social Theory. Oxon: Routledge.

Dayan, D. and Katz E. (1994) Media Events. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

de Giorgi, M. (2011) Las tribus de la izquierda: Bolches, latas y tupas en los 60. Fin de Siglo, Montevideo.

de Giorgi, M. (2013) El Frente Amplio y su laberinto. La izquierda uruguaya frente a la ley de caducidad. In Aldo Marchesi, Ley de caducidad: un tema inconcluso. pp. 61-102. Trilce, Montevideo. De Marco, J. (2014) Más de un millón de uruguayos "vive" en

Facebook. El País. Available online on <http://www.elpais.com.uy/vida-actual/mas-millon-uruguayos-vive-facebook.html>. Last accessed on 26 June 2017.

De Posadas, I. (2016) ¿Por qué se van? El País. Available online on <http://www.elpais.com.uy/opinion/que-se-enfoque-ignacio-posadas>. Last accessed on 6 June 2017.

de Tarde, G. (2011) *Monadology and sociology*. Re.Press. Melbourne.

Dewey, J. (1939) *Theory of Valuation*. University of Chicago Press, Illinois.

Dewey, J. (1996) *Theory of the moral life*. Ardent Media.

Diario Colonia (2014) *Redes sociales en Uruguay, como se usan?*. Diario Colonia online. Available online <http://diariocolonia.com/revista/empresas-protagonistas/redes-sociales-en-uruguay-como-se-usan/> Last accessed on 24 February 2014.

EL PAIS (2014a) *Bordaberry denunció campaña a través de perfiles falsos en Twitter*. Diario EL PAIS. Available online on <http://www.elpais.com.uy/informacion/bordaberry-denuncio-perfiles-falsos-twitter.html>. Last access on 9 March 2014.

EL PAIS (2014b) *Un mapa para conocer la presencia de Internet en todo el mundo*. Diario EL PAIS Available online on <http://www.elpais.com.uy/vida-actual/mapa-conocer-presencia-internet-mundo.html>. Last access on 19 September 2014.

Diebold, F. (2003) 'Big Data' Dynamic factor models for macroeconomic measurement and forecasting. *Advances in Economics and Econometrics: Theory and Applications*, Eighth World Congress of the Econometric Society,"(edited by M. Dewatripont, LP Hansen and S. Turnovsky)

DiJulio, S. and Wood, A. (2008) *Online Tactics Success: An Examination of the Obama for America New Media Campaign*. Wilburforce Foundation. Seattle.

Downey, J. and Fenton, N. (2003) New media, counter publicity and the public sphere. *New Media & Society*, 5(2)

Downs, A. (1957) An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy. *Journal of Political Economy* Vol 65 (2), pp135-150.

Edosomwan, S., Prakasan, S. K., Kouame, D., Watson, J., & Seymour, T. (2011) The history of social media and its impact on business. *Journal of Applied Management and entrepreneurship*, Vol 16 (3), pp79-91.

El Observador (2013a) Proponen a Constanza Moreira para que compita con Vázquez. Available online on <http://www.elobservador.com.uy/proponen-constanza-moreira-que-compita-vazquez-n2600111/2>. Last accessed on 14 February 2016.

El Observador (2013b) Constanza Moreira: "No creo que mi candidatura sea algo que el FA haya querido". El Observador. Available online on <http://www.elobservador.com.uy/constanza-moreira-no-creo-que-mi-candidatura-sea-algo-que-el-fa-haya-querido-n262216>. Last accessed on 8 February 2016.

El Observador (2014) Coalición Por Una Comunicación Democrática. El Observador. Available online on <http://www.foycom.org.uy/2014/07/politicos-jugados-la-tv/>. Last accessed on 10 June 2017.

El Observador (2015) Vázquez - Lacalle Pou: una relación cargada de desprecio mutuo e ironías. El Observador. Available online on <http://www.elobservador.com.uy/vazquez-lacalle-pou-una-relacion-cargada-desprecio-mutuo-e-ironias-n689513>. Last accessed on 20 December 2016.

El País (2014) El truco de Lacalle Pou para hacer "la bandera". Available online on <http://www.elpais.com.uy/informacion/truco-lacalle-pou-bandera.html>. Last accessed on 20 December 2016.

Ellison, N.B., Steinfield, C. and Lampe, C. (2007) The benefits of Facebook “friends:” Social capital and college students’ use of online social network sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 12(4), pp1143-1168.

Engesser, S., Ernst, N., Esser, F. and Büchel, F. (2016) Populism and social media: how politicians spread a fragmented ideology. *Information, Communication & Society*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2016.1207697>. Last accessed on 20 June 2017.

Engesser, S., Fawzi, N. and Larsson, A. (2017) Populist online communication: introduction to the special issue. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20:9, pp1279-1292, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2017.1328525. Last accessed on 20 June 2017.

ESET (2012) Facebook lidera el ranking de las redes sociales en Latinoamérica. Available online on http://www.eset.com.uy/threatcenter/index.phpsubaction=showfull&id=1341280296&archive=&start_from=&ucat=2&n=2. Last accessed on 20 June 2017.

Equipos (2014a) HABRÁ SEGUNDA VUELTA Y NADIE TENDRÁ MAYORÍA PARLAMENTARIA. Available online on http://equipos.com.uy/noticias_despliegue.php?i=184. Last accessed on 15 November 2017.

Equipos (2014b) Las redes sociales en la campaña electoral. Available online on http://www.equipos.com.uy/noticias_despliegue.php?i=170. Last accessed on 25 June 2017.

Espeland, W.N. and Sauder, M. (2007) Rankings and Reactivity: How Public Measures Recreate Social Worlds. *American journal of sociology* 113(1), pp1-40.

Esposito, E. (2017) Organizing without Understanding: Lists in Ancient and in Digital Cultures *Literaturwiss Linguistik* 47 pp351–359. Springer-Verlag. Available online on <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41244-017-0064-4>. Last accessed on 15 June 2018.

Facebook (2014) About BUSINESS INFO. Facebook UK Page. Available online on <https://www.facebook.com/FacebookUK/info>. Last accessed on 13 August 2014.

Facebook (2015). Company Info. Facebook Newsroom. Available online on <http://newsroom.fb.com/companyinfo/> Last accessed on 13 February 2015.

Facebook (2016) What are the different Page roles and what can they do? Facebook Help Centre. Available online on <https://www.facebook.com/help/289207354498410>. Last access on 17 June 2016.

Facebook (2017a). How do I react to a post or comment? Facebook HelpCentre. Available online on https://www.facebook.com/help/933093216805622?helpref=faq_content. Last accessed on 23 June 2016.

Facebook (2017b). Products. Facebook News Room. Available online on <https://www.itam.newsroom.fb.com/products>. Last accessed on 23 June 2016.

Facebook (2017c). Products. Facebook Help Desk. Available online on https://www.facebook.com/help/1735443093393986?helpref=hc_global_nav. Last accessed on 23 June 2016.

Férrandez, M. (2014) Las diez claves de las elecciones en Uruguay. La Nación. Available online on <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1738632-las-diez-claves-de-las-elecciones-en-uruguay>. Last accessed on 25 Octubre 2014.

Frente Amplio (2016) Principios del FA. Frente Amplio Available online on <http://www.frenteampio.org.uy/index.php?Q=articulo&ID=1002>. Last accessed on 29 January 2016.

Frente Amplio (2017) Fundación. Available online on <https://frenteampio.uy/somos-fa/historia/item/7-fundacion> Last accessed on 9 June 2017.

Frente Amplio Uruguay (2014) Facebook Group About. Available online on <https://www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/>. Last accessed on 29 October 2014.

Fuchs, C. (2011). *Foundations of critical media and information studies*. Taylor & Francis, London.

Fuchs, C. (2014) *Social media: A Critical Introduction*. Sage. London.

Fish, A., Kelty, C., Murillo, L., Nguyen, L. and Panofsky, A. (2011) Birds of the Internet: Towards a field guide to the organization and governance of participation. *Journal of Cultural Economy*, vol 4, no. 2, 157-187., 10.1080/17530350.2011.563069. Taylor & Francis online.

Gaffney, D. (2010) #iranElection: Quantifying Online Activism. Web Science Conf. 2010, April 26-27, Raleigh.

Garfinkel, H. (1967) *Studies in ethnomethodology*. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

Gari, A. (2015) *El verdadero Martín Fierro*. Editorial Martín, Mar del Plata.

Gascue, A. (2014) ¿Es posible generar desde Facebook o Twitter movilizaciones sociales? Cuadernos de Compañero 09 Available online <http://www.cuadernosdecompa.com.uy/cuadernosdecompa/9elcuartopoder/261iesposiblegenerardesdefacebookotwittermovilizacionessociales.html> Last access on 23 November 2014.

Gerbaudo, P. (2014) The persistence of collectivity in digital protest, *Information, Communication & Society*, 17:2, 264-268, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2013.868504. Last access on 6 June 2016.

Gerbaudo, P. (2015). Populism 2.0: Social media activism, the generic Internet user and interactive direct democracy In Daniel Trotter and Christian Fuchs (Eds.), *Social media, politics and the state: Protests, revolutions, riots, crime and policing in the age of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube*. Routledge. Pp67-87. New York.

Gerbaudo, P (2016) Rousing the Facebook Crowd: Digital Enthusiasm and Emotional Contagion in the 2011 Protests in Egypt and Spain. *International Journal of Communication* (10), pp254–273.

Gerbaudo, P. and Treré E. (2015) In search of the 'we' of social media activism: introduction to the special issue on social media and protest identities. introduction to the special issue on social media and protest identities, *Information, Communication & Society*, 18:8, 865-871, Routledge. Available online on <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1043319>. Last access on 13 September 2016.

Gerlitz, C. (2013) *Brands and Continuous Economies*. Goldsmiths, University of London, London.

Gerlitz, C. and Helmond, A. (2011) Hit, link, like and share. Organising the social and the fabric of the web. *Digital Methods Winter Conference Proceedings*, pp1-29. Goldsmiths Research Online.

Gerlitz, C. and Helmond, A. (2013) The Like economy: Social buttons and the data-intensive web. *New Media & Society*.

Gerlitz, C. and Lury, C. (2014) *Social media* and self-evaluating assemblages: on numbers, orderings and values. *Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory* 15(2), pp174-188.

Gerodimos, R. and Justinussen, J. (2014) Obama's 2012 Facebook Campaign: Political Communication in the Age of the Like Button. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*.

Gibney, E. (2018) The scant science behind Cambridge Analytica's controversial marketing techniques. *Nature* peers into the evidence for 'psychographic targeting'. *Nature Online*. Available online on <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-03880-4>. Last accessed on 9 April 2018.

Lewis, P. and Hilder, P. (2018) Leaked: Cambridge Analytica's blueprint for Trump victory. *The Guardian*. Available online on <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/mar/23/leaked-cambridge-analyticas-blueprint-for-trump-victory>. Last accessed on 9 April 2018.

Gibson, R. (2009) New media and the revitalisation of politics. *Representation*, 45(3), pp289-299.

Gibson, R. and Ward, S. (2012) Political organizations and campaigning online. *The SAGE Handbook of Political Communication* 62-. Editors Holli A. Semetko and Margaret Scammell. Sage Publications, London.

Gillespie, M. (2011) Real-time media monitoring, digital diplomacy and mobile methods: A case study of BBC Arabic's *social media* experiment Greenwich 7/10. p. 27, CRESC Working Paper Series. CRESC, Milton Keynes.

Glass, J. (2015) AN EX-FACEBOOK EMPLOYEE DISHES ON THE INFAMOUS POKE. *Thrillist*. Available online on <https://www.thrillist.com/culture/what-does-the-facebook-poke-mean>. Last accessed on 29 June 2017.

Goswami, K (2011) Did Mark Zuckerberg's Inspiration for Facebook Come Before Harvard? *kaustooov.weebly.com*. Available online on <http://kaustooov.weebly.com/1/>

post/2011/5/did-mark-zuckerbergs-inspiration-for-facebook-come-before-harvard.html.

Last accessed on 9 September 2015.

Gillespie, M. (2013) BBC Arabic, *Social media* and Citizen Production: An Experiment in Digital Democracy before the Arab Spring. *Theory, Culture & Society* 30(4), 92-130.

Goffman, E. (1986) *Frame Analysis*. Northeastern University Press. Harper & Row, New York.

Goldhaber, M. (1997) The Attention Economy and the Net. *First Monday*, 2, 4.

Available online on <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/519/440>. Last accessed on 5 January, 2015.

Goñi, U. (2016) Uruguay's Quiet Democratic Miracle. *The New York Times*. Available online on http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/10/opinion/uruguaysquietdemocraticmiracle.html?_r=0 1/5. Last accessed on 11 November, 2016.

Graeber, D. (2001) *Toward An Anthropological Theory of Value*. Palgrave, New York.

Greenhow, C. and Li, J. (2013). Like, comment, share: collaboration and civic engagement within social network sites. In *Emerging Technologies for the Classroom*, pp127-141. Springer, New York.

Groshek, J. and Koc-Michalska, K, (2017) Helping populism win? Social media use, filter bubbles, and support for populist presidential candidates in the 2016 US election campaign, *Information, Communication & Society*, 20:9, pp1389-1407, DOI:10.1080/1369118X.2017.1329334.

Grosser, B (2014) What Do Metrics Want? How Quantification Prescribes Social Interaction on Facebook. *Computational Culture*. Available online on <http://computationalculture.net/article/what-do-metrics-want>. Last accessed on 10 September 2014.

Grow, G. and Ward, J. (2013) The role of authenticity in electoral *social media* campaigns. First Monday 18(4). Available online on <http://journals.uic.edu/ojs/index.php/fm/rt/printerFriendly/2123/1976>. Last accessed on 23 June 2014.

Grupo Radar (2010) 8va Edición, El Perfil del Internauta Uruguayo. Available online on <http://www.gruporadar.com.uy/01/?p=554>. Last accessed on 12 June 2015.

Grupo Radar (2014a) 11a Edición, El Perfil del Internauta Uruguayo. Grupo Radar.

Grupo Radar (2014b) 11a Edición, El Perfil del Internauta Uruguayo. Resumen ejecutivo. Available online on <http://www.gruporadar.com.uy/04/p557>. Last accessed on 12 June 2015.

Grupo Radar (2015) El Perfil del Internauta Uruguayo, 12a Edición 2015. Available online on <http://www.gruporadar.com.uy/01/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/El-Perfil-del-Internauta-Uruguayo-Resumen-ejecutivo.pdf>. Last accessed on 15 November 2017.

Gulati, J. and Williams, C. (2012) A Campaign Perspective on the Motivation for Adopting Social Media in US Congressional Campaigns. Prepared for delivery at the 22nd World Congress of Political Science, Madrid. Available online on http://paperroom.ipsa.org/papers/paper_18836.pdf. Last accessed on 17 January 2018.

Habermas, J. (1991) The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. The MIT Press. Massachusetts, Cambridge.

Halperin, T. (1972) Historia Contemporánea de America Latina. Alianza, Madrid.

Hara, N. (2008) Internet use for political mobilization: Voices of participants. First Monday 13 (7).

Helgesson, C. and Muniesa, F. (2013) For what it's worth: An introduction to valuation studies. Valuation Studies 1(1), pp1-10.

Helmond, A. (2015) The platformization of the Web: Making Web data platform ready. *Social Media+ Society*, 1(2), Sage. 2056305115603080. Accessed on 17 August 2016. Available online on <http://sms.sagepub.com/content/1/2/2056305115603080.full.pdf+html>.

Hodges, A. (2014) 'Yes, We Can': The Social Life of a Political Slogan. *Contemporary Critical Discourse Studies*, pp349-366.

Hogan, B. (2010) The presentation of self in the age of *social media*: Distinguishing performances and exhibitions online. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*

Howard, R. (2008) The vernacular web of participatory media. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 25(5), pp490-513.

Hunsinger J. and Senft, T. (2014) *The Social media Handbook*. Routledge, Oxon.

INE (2014) Uruguay en Cifras 2014. Instituto Nacional de Estadística. Available online on http://www.ine.gub.uy/documents/10181/39317/Uruguay_en_cifras_2014.pdf/aac28208-4670-4e96-b8c1-b2abb93b5b13. Last accessed on 2 June 2017.

Intendencia de Montevideo (2015) Candombe y llamadas. Available online on <http://www.montevideo.gub.uy/ciudad-y-cultura/historia-y-costumbres/candombe-y-llamadas>. Last accessed on 28 January 2017.

İstanbulluoğlu, D. (2014) An Exploration Of Consumers' Online Complaining Behaviour On Facebook. Department of Marketing Birmingham Business School College of Social Sciences. Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham. Available online on <http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/5036/>. Last accessed on 17 October 2016.

Jandail, R.R.S. and Ratan, R. (2014) A proposed Novel Approach for Sentiment Analysis and Opinion Mining. *International Journal of UbiComp* 5.

Jenkins, H. (2006) *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*. NYU Press.

Jenkins, H. (2008) *The Moral Economy of Web 2.0*. Available online on http://henryjenkins.org/2008/03/the_moral_economy_of_web_20_pa_3.html. Last accessed on 7 November 2014.

Jenkins, H. (2012) *Clicktivism: The New Political Commons*. Policy Options. 2012 (11) pp10-2.

Jenkins, H., Purushotma, R., Weigel, M., Cliton, K and Robison, A. (2009) *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century*. MIT Press.

Jensen, C. (2010) *Ontologies for Developing Things: Making Health Care Futures Through Technology*. Sense Publishers, Rotterdam.

Jurgenson, N. (2010) Review of Ondi Timoner's *We Live in Public*. *Surveillance & Society* 8, no. 3: 377.

Juris, J.S. (2008) *Networking futures: The movements against corporate globalization*. Duke University Press.

Kavada, A. (2015) Creating the collective: social media, the Occupy Movement and its constitution as a collective actor. *Information, Communication & Society*, 18:8, pp872-886, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2015.1043318.

Kennedy, H., Poell, T. and van Dijck, J. (2015) Data and agency. *Big Data & Society*. pp1–7.

Kirkpatrick, D. (2010) *The Facebook Effect: The Inside Story of the Company That Is Connecting the World*. Simon and Schuster. New York.

Kozinets, R. (2010) *Netnography, Doing Ethnographic Research Online*. Sage Publications, London.

Kramer, A., Guillory, J. and Hancock, J. (2014) Experimental evidence of massive-scale emotional contagion through social networks. *PNAS* Vol.111 (24) pp8788–90 Princeton University, Princeton.

Krug, S. (2016) Reactions Now Available Globally. Facebook Newsroom. Facebook Inc. Available online on <http://newsroom.fb.com/news/2016/02/reactionsnowavailableglobally/>. Last accessed on 26 March 2016.

Kvale, S. (1996) *InterViews. An introduction to qualitative research writing*. Sage Publications, London.

Kvale, S. and Brinkmann, S. (2009) *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. Sage Publications, London.

Laclau, E. (2006) Consideraciones sobre el populismo latinoamericano. *Cuadernos del CENDES*, (23)62, pp115-120. Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas.

Langlois, G., Elmer, G., McKelvey, F. and Devereaux, Z. (2009). Networked publics: The double articulation of code and politics on Facebook. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 34(3).

La Nación (2016) Los grandes escándalos de "Bailando por un sueño". La Nación Online. Available online on <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/1901648-los-grandes-escandalos-de-bailando-por-un-sueno/amp/1901648>. Last accessed on 2 April 2017.

La Red 21 (2013) PVP propone a senadora Constanza Moreira como precandidata a la Presidencia. La Red 21. Available online on <http://www.lr21.com.uy/politica/1129225-gobierno-uruguay-politica-elecciones-2014-precandidata-constanza-moreira-alternativa-presidencia-partido-victoria-pueblo-pvp> Last accessed on 8 February 2016.

La República (2013) Las Redes se movilizan por Constanza Moreira en la plaza Liber Seregni. La República. Available online on <http://www.republica.com.uy/las-redes-se-movilizan-por-constanza-moreira-en-la-plaza-liber-seregni/395071/>. Last accessed on 8 February 2016.

La República (2014) Uruguay, líder en gobierno electrónico. Available online on <http://www.republica.com.uy/uruguay-lider-en-gobierno-electronico/>. Last accessed on 7 Octubre 2014.

La Voz (2011) Tinelli podría pagar cuatro millones de pesos de multa por el desnudo de Cinthia Fernández. Vos. <http://vos.lavoz.com.ar/tv/tinelli-podria-pagar-cuatro-millones-pesos-multa-desnudo-cinthia-fernandez>. La Voz online. Last accessed on 2 April 2017.

Lash, S. (2012) Deforming the Figure: Topology and the Social Imaginary. *Theory Culture Society* 2012 29:261-pp287.

Lash, S. and Lury, C. (2007) *Global Culture Industry: The Mediation of Things*. Wiley, London.

Latour, B. (1986) Visualisation and Cognition: Drawing Things Together. In H. Kuklick (editor) *Knowledge and Society Studies in the Sociology of Culture Past and Present*. Jai Press Vol 6, pp1-40.

Latour, B. (2005) *Reassembling the social-an introduction to actor-network-theory*. *Reassembling the Social-An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Law, J. (2004) *After Method. Mess in social science research*. Routledge, Oxon.

Law, J. and Mol A. (1998) On Metrics and Fluids: Notes on Otherness. 20–38 in Robert Chia (ed.), *Organised Worlds: Explorations in Technology, Organisation and Modernity*. Routledge. London.

Law, J. and Singleton, V. (2004) Object Lessons. Available at <http://www.heterogeneities.net/publications/LawSingleton2004ObjectLessons.pdf>. Last accessed on 4 August 2015.

Lazzaro, S. (2017) Tired of News? Head to Pornhub to Watch Donal Trump Bang the Entire Country at Once. *Observer*. Available online on <http://www.observer.com/2017/01/tired-of-news-head-to-pornhub-to-watch-donal-trump-fuck-the-entire-country-at-once>. Last accessed on 26 April 2017.

Lemert, C. and Branaman, A. (1997) *The Goffman reader*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Levenshus, A. (2010) Online Relationship Management in a Presidential Campaign: A Case Study of the Obama Campaign's Management of Its Internet-Integrated Grassroots Effort. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 22(3) 313–335. Routledge, London.

Li, L. (2011). Social network sites comparison between the united states and China: Case study on facebook and renren network. In *Business Management and Electronic Information (BMEI)*, 2011 International Conference on Vol1, pp825-827. IEEE.

Lorenzoni, M., Pérez, V. (2013) Cambios y continuidades de la izquierda en Uruguay: un análisis a partir de las propuestas pragmáticas del frente amplio 1971-2009. *Revista Uruguaya de Ciencia Política*. V22, 1. pp.81-102.

Losa, G. (2014) El trabajo de los publicistas detrás de los candidatos. *El Observador*. Available online on <http://www.elobservador.com.uy/noticia/imprimir/270923/el-trabajo-de-los-publicistas-detras-de-los-candidatos/>. Last accessed on 2 February 2014.

Luna, J. (2014) Frente Amplio de Uruguay prepara campaña presidencial. Noticias de Prensa Latina. Available online on http://www.prensa-latina.cu/index2.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2408111&pop=1&page=0. Last accessed on 14 March 2014.

Lury, C. (2004) Brands. The logos of the global economy. Routledge. London

Lury, C. and Marres, N. (2015) Notes on Objectual Valuation. In Martin Kornberger, Lise Justesen, Anders Koed Madsen and Jan Mouritsen Making Things Valuable. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Lury, C., Parisi, L. and Terranova, T. (2012) Introduction: The Becoming Topological of Culture. Theory Culture Society 29: 3. Sage.

Lutz, M. (2009) The Social Pulpit. Barack Obama's Social Media Toolkit. Edelman. Washington.

Lycett, M. (2013) 'Datafication': making sense of (big) data in a complex world. European Journal of Information Systems. 22, pp381–386.

Marres, N. and Gerlitz, C. (2014) Interface Methods: Renegotiating relations between digital research, STS and Sociology, Working CSISP, pp1-37. Goldsmiths College, London.

Marr, B. (2015) Big Data: Case study collection. Available online on https://www.ap-institute.com/media/490032/bigdata-case-studybook_final.pdf. Last accessed on 2 July 2017.

Mascitelli, E. (1985) Diccionario de términos Marxistas. Editorial Grijalbo, México.

Mayer-Schonberger, V. and Cukier, K. (2013) Big Data: A Revolution That Will Transform How We Live, Work and Think. John Murray, London.

Melucci, A. (1989) *Nomads of the present: Social movements and individual needs in contemporary society*. Vintage.

Melucci, A. (1995a) The process of collective identity. In *Social movements and culture*, Vol 4. Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans, editors, pp41-63. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Melucci, A. (1995b) The conflict and the Rule: Social Movements and Political Systems. *Sociológica*. (10) 28, 1-7 División de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades. Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana, Azcapotzalco.

Melucci, A. (1996) *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Metaxas P., Mustafaraj, E. and Gayo-Avello D. (2011) *How (Not) To Predict Elections*. IEEE International Conference on Social Computing. Computing Society, Sydney.

Milan, S. (2015) From Social Movements to Cloud Protesting: The Evolution of Collective Identity Information, *Communication & Society*, 18(8), pp887-900.

Miller, D. (2011) *Tales from Facebook*. Polity, London.

Miller, D. (2017) Anthropology is the discipline but the goal is ethnography. *Journal of Ethnographic Theory*. HAU. 7 (1): pp27–31 Available online on <http://dx.doi.org/10.14318/hau7.1.006>. Last access on 25 August 2017.

Miller, D. and Sinanan, J. (2017) *Visualising Facebook*. UCL Press, London.

Miller, D. and Slater, D. (2000) *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach*. Berg Publishers, Oxford.

Miller, D., Costa, E., Haynes, N., McDonald, T., Nicolescu, R. Sinanan, J., Spyer, J., Ventkatraman, S. and Wang, X. (2016). How the world changed social media. UCL Press, London.

Mitchell, M. (2009) Business Model of Facebook. Available online on http://www.modir21.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/facebook_business_model.pdf. Last accessed on 2 July 2017.

Montevideo Portal (2014a) Banderazo. Montevideo Portal. Available online on <http://www.montevideo.com.uy/auc.aspx?250822>. Last accessed on 24 October 2014.

Montevideo Portal (2014b) El juego de los números. Montevideo Portal. Available online on <http://www.montevideo.com.uy/ZZZ-No-se-usa/Encuestas-Factum-Cifra-y-Radar-uc250642>. Last accessed on 15 November 2017.

Moor, L. and Lury, C. (2011) Making and Measuring Value, *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 4:4. , pp439-454 DOI: 10.1080/17530350.2011.609708 Routledge. London.

Moore, J. (2018) Cambridge Analytica Had a Role in Kenya Election, Too. *New York Times*. Available online on <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/20/world/africa/kenya-cambridge-analytica-election.html>. Last accessed on 13 April 2018.

Moreira, C. (2008) Uruguay y la (problemática) construcción del consenso. asistencia social y negociación colectiva durante el gobierno del frente amplio (2005-2007). *Bajo el Volcán*, 7 (12) pp47-64. Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Puebla.

Moreira, C. (2009) De la "Suiza de América" Al "Paisito: Escenarios y perspectivas del Uruguay en la Tercera Ola De La Democracia. In Fernando Calderón, *CRISIS Y CAMBIO EN AMÉRICA LATINA*. Cuaderno de Gobernabilidad Democrática Vol. 3. Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo. Siglo XXI, Buenos Aires, pp81 – 113.

Morozov, E. (2011) *The Net Delusion: How not to liberate the world*. Penguin UK, London.

Murthy, D. (2008) *Digital Ethnography: An Examination of the Use of New Technologies for Social Research*. Sociology SAGE Publications. 42(5) 837–855, London.

Mudde, C. (2004) *The Populist Zeitgeist. Government and Opposition*. Vol.39 (4) pp541-563. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.

Nahum, B. (2004a) *Manual de Historia del Uruguay. Tomo I. 1830-1903*. Ediciones de la Banda Oriental, Montevideo.

Nahum, B. (2004b) *Manual de Historia del Uruguay. Tomo II. 1903-2000*. Ediciones de la Banda Oriental, Montevideo.

Nisbet, R. (1953) *The Quest for Community Programs: A study in the Ethics of Order and Freedom*. Oxford University Press.

Norris, P. (2001) *Digital divide: Civic engagement, information poverty, and the Internet worldwide*. Cambridge University Press.

Norris, P., Martinez, F. and Grömping, M. (2015). *The Year in Elections, 2014*. HKS Working Paper No. RWP15-008.

Norris, P. and Grömping, M. (2017) *Populist Threats to Electoral Integrity: The Year in Elections, 2016-2017*. HKS Faculty Research Working Paper. Harvard University. Available online on <https://research.hks.harvard.edu/publications/workingpapers/Index.aspx>. Last accessed on 10 October 2017.

Nyquist, L. (2015) Utilizing Social Media in the Business World. Business Conference. Fort Lewis College, Durango. <https://www.fortlewis.edu/Portals/165/fort-lewis-college-inter-fb-pres.pdf>. Last accessed on 24 June 2017.

Papacharissi, Z. (2014) Toward New Journalism(s) Affective News, Hybridity, and liminal Spaces. *Journalism Studies*, pp27-40. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2014.890328> Last accessed on 12 July 2015.

Plasser, F and Plasser, G. (2002) *Global Political Campaigning*. Praeger, London.

Powell, A. (2017) Trump Speech Uploaded To Pornhub As 'Rich White Man F*cks Entire Country All At Once'. Praeger, London. Available online on <http://www.thehookmag.com/2017/01/trump-speech-uploaded-pornhub-rich-white-man-fcks-entire-country-at-once/>. Last accessed on 26 April 2017.

O'Reilly, T. (2005) *What Is Web 2.0, Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software*, Web 2.0 Conference. O'Reilly Media, San Francisco.

O'Reilly, T. and Battelle, J. (2009) *Web Squared: Web 2.0 Five Years On*. 1-13, Web 2.0 Summit. O'Reilly AlphaTech Ventures, San Francisco.

O'Sullivan, P. and Flanagan, A. (2003) Reconceptualizing 'flaming' and other problematic messages. *New Media & Society* Vol 5 (1) pp69-94. Available online on <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1461444803005001908>. Last accessed on 12 June 2017.

Owyang, J. (2012) Facebook: A Brilliant Business Model. *Web Strategist*. Available online on <http://www.web-strategist.com/blog/2012/05/19/facebook-a-brilliant-business-model/>. Last accessed on 2 July 2017.

Phillips, S. (2007) A brief history of Facebook, *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2007/jul/25/media.newmedia>.

Radakovich, R. and Escuder, S. (2013) DESAFÍOS Y LÍMITES DEL USO SOCIAL DE INTERNET UNA APROXIMACIÓN AL CASO URUGUAYO. *Revista de Ciencias Sociales*. Universidad de la República. Vol.26 (33). pp31-54.

Rae, A. and Singleton, A. (2015) Putting big data in its place: a Regional Studies and Regional Science perspective. *Regional Studies*, *Regional Science* 2(1), pp1-5.

Raymond, E. (1999) The Cathedral and the Bazaar. *Knowledge, Technology & Policy*. 12: 23, pp23-49. doi:10.1007/s12130-999-1026-0.

Redes Frenteampelistas (2011) Quienes somos? Available online on <http://www.redefas.com/quienes-somos>. Last accessed 26 November 2017.

Rivas, R. (2014) Uruguay: una democracia ejemplar. *El Clarin*. Available online on <http://elclarin.cl/web/opinion/cronicas-de-un-pais-anormal/14038-uruguay-una-democracia-ejemplar.html>. Last accessed 2 February 2015.

Rilla, J. (2008) - Uruguay 1985-2007: Restauración, reforma, crisis y cambio electoral. *Revista Nueva América*, pp63-95.

Rogers, R. (2004) *Information politics on the Web*. MIT Press.

Rogers, R. (2009) *The End of the Virtual: Digital Methods*. UVA, Amsterdam

Rogers, R. (2010) Internet research: The question of method—A keynote address from the YouTube and the 2008 election cycle in the United States Conference. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 7(2-3), pp241-260.

Rogers, R. (2013a) Debanalizing Twitter: The transformation of an object of study. *Proceedings of the 5th Annual ACM Web Science Conference*.

Rogers, R. (2013b) *Digital methods*. MIT Press.

Ross, K. and Nightingale, V. (2003) *Media and Audiences: New Perspectives*. Open University Press.

Roizen, A. and Melendrez, P. (2014) Poca gente y críticas a medios y la oposición en el día del ComitéF. *El País*.

Roulston, K. (2010) Considering quality in qualitative interviewing. *Qualitative Research*, 10 (2): pp199-228.

Rubio, E. (2013) Enredados: la irrupción de las redes frenteamplistas en la campaña electoral de 2009. Pablo Gorriti, Lucio Ornstein and Eduardo Vaz, Editors. Vol1 pp145-pp150. (N.P), Montevideo.

Salisbury, J.H. (2013) *Playing with value: player engagements with videogames as a negotiation of net cultural worth*. Middlesex University.

Savage, M. and Burrows, R. (2007) The Coming Crisis of Empirical Sociology. *Sociology* 41(5), pp885-899.

Savage, M. and Burrows, R. (2009) Some Further Reflections on the Coming Crisis of Empirical Sociology. *Sociology* 43(4), pp762-772.

Savage, M., Ruppert, E. and Law, J. (2010) *Digital Devices: nine theses*, CRESC Working Paper Series, vol. 86. CRESC, The University of Manchester and Open University, Manchester.

Scammell, M. (2014) *Consumer Democracy: The Marketing of Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sedghi, A. (2014) Facebook: 10 years of social networking, in numbers. *The Guardian*. Available online on <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2014/feb/04/facebook-in-numbers-statistics>. Last Accessed 05 March 2015.

Seegerberg, A. and Bennett, L (2011) Social Media and the Organization of Collective Action: Using Twitter to Explore the Ecologies of Two Climate Change Protests. *The Communication Review*, 14:3, 197-215, DOI: 10.1080/10714421.2011.597250.

Shirky, C. (2008) *Here comes everybody: The power of organizing without organizations*. Penguin, London.

Spencer, A. (2007) *Hasta La Victoria Siempre: The Ongoing Rhetorical Revolution in Cuba*. *Texas Speech Communication Journal*. 31, pp16-23. Available online on https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Anthony_Spencer/publication/277028282_Hasta_La_Victoria_Siempre_The_Ongoing_Rhetorical_Revolution_in_Cuba/links/556026a708ae6f4dcc927603.pdf. Last Accessed 09 February 2017.

Stark, D. (2009) *The sense of dissonance: Accounts of worth in economic life*. Princeton University Press.

Surma, J. (2015) Social exchange in online social networks: The reciprocity phenomenon on Facebook. *Computer Communications*, (8)54, pp1-5. Available online on <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.comcom.2015.06.017>. Last access on 06 February 2018.

Sutton, C (2013) *The Candombe Drumming of Uruguay: Contextualizing Uruguayan Identity Through Afro-Uruguayan Rhythm*. Doctoral Essay. University of Miami. Available online on http://www.pas.org/docs/default-source/thesisdissertations/sutton_ct_2013.pdf. Last accessed on 29 January 2017.

Subrayado (2014) *La prueba de fuerza de Lacalle Pou, dedicada a Vázquez*. Subrayado. Available online <http://www.subrayado.com.uy/Site/noticia/35796/la-prueba-de-fuerza-de-lacalle-pou-dedicado-a-vazquez>. Last accessed on 26 November 2015.

Sweney, M. (2014) The Guardian overtakes New York Times in comScore traffic figures _ The Guardian. Available online <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2014/oct/21/the-guardian-overtakes-new-york-times-in-comscore-traffic-figures>. Last accessed on 30 June 2015.

Tagliaferro, G. (2015) Las ideas y las palabras. Montevideo Portal, las 40. Available online on <http://www.montevideo.com.uy/auc.aspx?263054,1179>. Last accessed on 3 March 2015.

Tkacz, N. (2010) Wikipedia and the politics of mass collaboration. Platform: journal of media and communication 2(2), pp40-53.

Tkacz, N. (2012) Wikipedia and the Politics of Openness. University of Melbourne, Melbourne.

Tkacz, N. (2013) FCJ-154 Trolls, Peers and the Diagram of Collaboration. The Fibreculture Journal, 22 2013: Available online on <http://twentytwo.fibreculturejournal.org/fcj-154-trolls-peers-and-the-diagram-of-collaboration/>. Last accessed on 27 November 2014.

Tkacz, N. (2015) Wikipedia and the Politics of Openness. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Torcal, M. (2006) Political disaffection and democratization history in new democracies. In Political Disaffection in Contemporary Democracies, edited by Mariano Torcal and José Montero. Routledge, Oxon 157-189.

Trent, J.S. and Friedenberg, R.V. (2008) Political campaign communication: Principles and practices. Rowman & Littlefield.

Trottier, D. and Fuchs, C. (2014) Theorising social media, politics and the state: An introduction. Routledge. London.

Tufekci, Z. (2008) Grooming, Gossip, Facebook And Myspace. *Information, Communication & Society*, 11(4), pp544-564, DOI: 10.1080/13691180801999050

Tumber, H. (1999) *News: A Reader*. Introduction. Ed. Howard Tumber. Oxford University Press. New York.

Uprichard, E. (2013) Focus: Big Data, Little Questions? *Focus* 13.

Vaccari, C. (2010) "Technology is a Commodity": The Internet in the 2008 United States Presidential Election. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 7(4), pp318-339.

Vaccari, C. (2013) From echo chamber to persuasive device? Rethinking the role of the Internet in campaigns. *New media & society* 15(1), pp109-127.

Vaidhyanathan, S. (2012) *The Googlization of everything:(and why we should worry)* University of California Press.

van Dijck, J. (2011) Facebook as a tool for producing sociality and connectivity. *Television & New Media*. 13(2), 160–176.

van Dijck, J. (2012) Facebook and the engineering of connectivity: A multi-layered approach to social media platforms. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*. 1-15. DOI: 10.1177/1354856512457548.

van Dijck, J. (2013) 'You have one identity': performing the self on Facebook and LinkedIn. *Media, Culture & Society* 35(2), 199–215.

van Dijck, J. (2014) Datafication, dataism and dataveillance: Big Data between scientific paradigm and ideology. *Surveillance & Society* 12(2): 197-208.

- Vaz, E. (2010) La política puede ser diferente. REDES FRENTEAMPLISTAS: LA NOVEDAD ELECTORAL. Vadenuevo. Available online on <https://vadenuevo.com.uy/index.php/the-news/501-17vadenuevo03>. Last accessed on 7 July 2017.
- Veja, C., Vaida, M. and Hagedorn, G. (2011) Sharing the knowledge: Semantic MediaWiki. *Acta Technica Napocensis* 52(2).
- Vidali, D. and Peterson, M. (2012) Ethnography as Theory and Method in the Study of Political Communication. In *The SAGE Handbook of Political Communication*. pp265-75. Editors Holli A. Semetko and Margaret Scammell. Sage Publications, London.
- Vis, F. (2013) A critical reflection on Big Data: Considering APIs, researchers and tools as data makers. *First Monday*. Available online on <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/4878>. Last accessed on 8 June 2014.
- Vitak, J., Zube, P., Smock, A., Carr, T., Ellison, N. and Lampe, C. (2011) It's Complicated: Facebook Users' Political Participation in the 2008 Election. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* 14(3), pp107-114.
- Voss, F. (1994) *Reporting the War*. The Smithsonian Institution Press, Manitoba.
- Wickman, F. (2014) What Was "Poking"? *Slate*. Available online on http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/technology/2014/02/facebook_s_poke_function_still_a_mystery_on_the_social_network_s_10th_anniversary.html. Last accessed on 28 June 2017.
- Willett, M. (2015) Poking someone on Facebook is no longer a creepy or lazy way to flirt. *Business Insider*. Available online on <http://www.businessinsider.com/wheres-the-facebook-poke-now-2015-7>. Last accessed on 28 June 2017.
- Williams, D. and Tapscott, D. (2006) *Wikinomics, How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything*. Portfolio, New York, 124-150.

Wilson, R.E., Gosling, S.D. and Graham, L.T. (2012) A review of Facebook research in the social sciences. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 7(3), 203-220.

Woolley, J. Limperos A., and Oliver, M. (2010) The 2008 Presidential Election, 2.0: A Content Analysis of User-Generated Political Facebook Groups, *Mass Communication and Society*, 13:5, pp631-652, DOI: 10.1080/15205436.2010.516864.

Xenos, M. and Foot, K. (2008) "Not your father's Internet: The generation gap in online politics". In Lance Bennett (editor) *Civic life online: Learning how digital media can engage youth*. MIT Press, Cambridge, pp51–70.

Yadav, Z. (2006) Facebook - The Complete Biography. Masable. Available online on <http://mashable.com/2006/08/25/facebook-profile/#ae2xEQaeAuqF>. Last accessed on 29 June 2017.

Yaffe, J. (2013) Competencia interna y adaptación partidaria en el Frente Amplio de Uruguay. *Perfiles Latinoamericanos*. Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales. V.21 (41), Mexico City.

Žižek, S (2002). A cyberspace Lenin: why not? In *International Socialism* V.95 (2). Available online on <https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/isj2/2002/isj2-095/zizek.htm>. Last accessed on 3 July 2018.

Appendix I

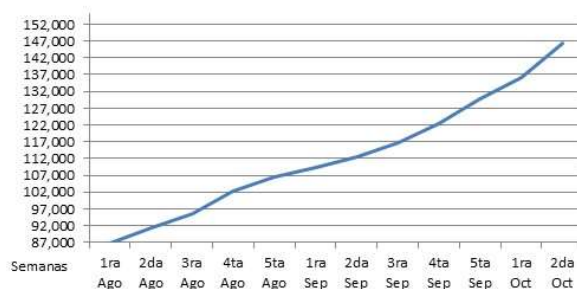
List of Facebook URLs used to collect data

Facebook URL
https://www.facebook.com/ConstanzaMoreira2014
https://www.facebook.com/groups/1489150961372046/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/233523633482115/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/25099087096/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/255512044623246/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/326542050829648/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/549694878444430/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/574251169328532/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/64407121015/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/674152342677806
https://www.facebook.com/jorgewlarranaga
https://www.facebook.com/jorgewlarranaga
https://www.facebook.com/Lista66PartidoNacional
https://www.facebook.com/Lista66PartidoNacional?ref=ts&fref=ts
https://www.facebook.com/LuisLacallePouOficial
https://www.facebook.com/mpp609
https://www.facebook.com/oficialpcolorado
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Jovenes-por-la-Positiva-404/1465106077091796
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pablo-Mieres/265608830128156
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Unidad-Popular-Uruguay/397638803699471
https://www.facebook.com/partidoIndependiente
https://www.facebook.com/pedro.bordaberry
https://www.facebook.com/PEDROBORDABERRYOFICIAL
https://www.facebook.com/ZoocialistasJSU/timeline
https://www.facebook.com/FrenteAmplioOficial

Appendix II Weekly Report for the FA campaign

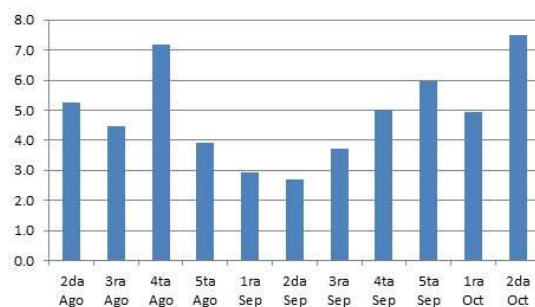
Evolución de Me gustan en Facebook (01-08 a 09-10)

Frente Amplio Página Oficial Fbk - Me Gusta (evolución 01 Ago - 16 Oct)



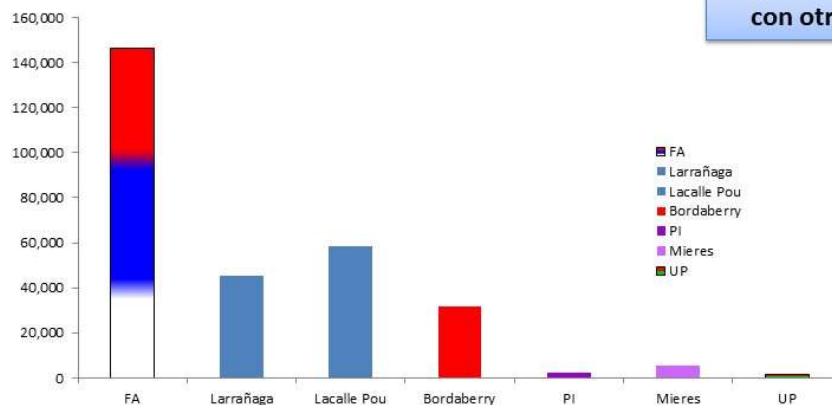
Me gusta
Frente Amplio

Crecimiento % semanal de Me gusta en la Página Frente Amplio



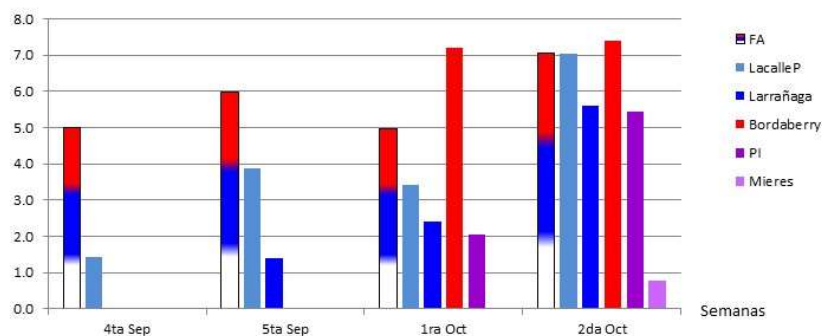
1

Cantidad de Me gusta (16-10-14) en páginas oficiales de Fbk

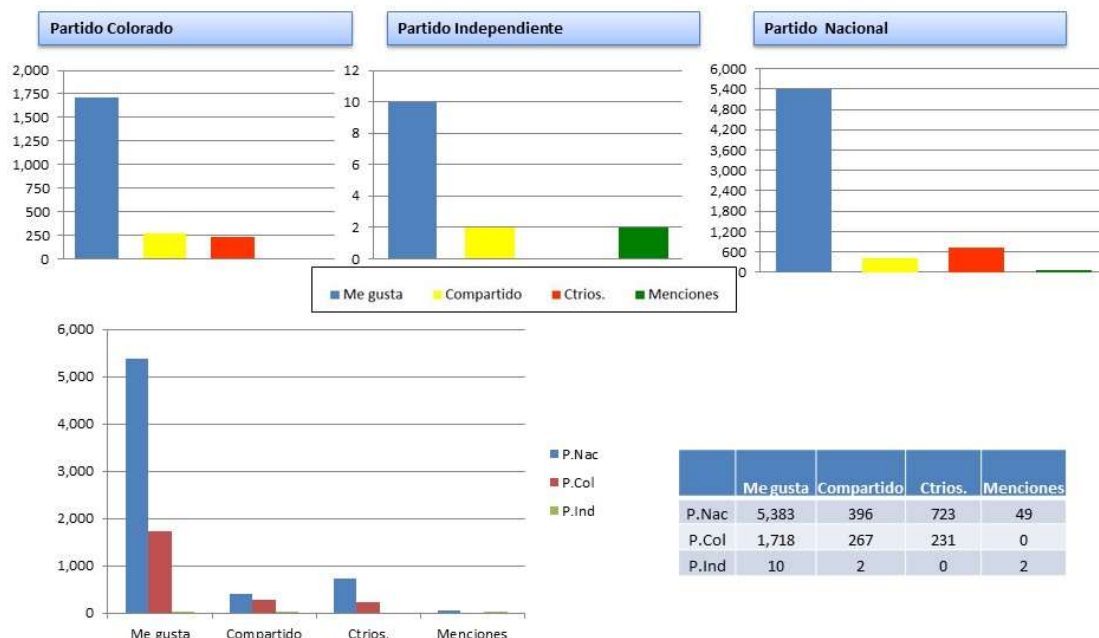


Me gustan comparativo
con otros partidos

Crecimiento % semanal de Me gusta de páginas oficiales en Fbk de diferentes partidos



Otros Partidos - Publicación con mayor alcance (09-10 al 16-10)



3

Detalles de publicación con mayor alcance (09-10 al 16-10)

Publicación con mayor alcance Partido Independiente (09-10 al 16-10)



5.714
Me gustan

<https://www.facebook.com/Pablo-Mieres/265608830128156> (Utiliza Twitter app como medio para publicar)

Día	Hora	Título	Contenido	Palabras claves	Me gusta	Compartido	Ctios.	Menciones
Dom 12/10	19:33	Cierres de campaña	Sólo texto	Florida, @pindependiente, @ramoslaraburu, Maldonado, Rocha, Cierres-de-campaña	10	2	0	2 (Cuentas Twitter)

Publicación con mayor alcance Partido Colorado (09-10 al 16-10) *



31.675 Me gustan

<https://www.facebook.com/PEDROBORDABERRYOFICIAL>

Día	Hora	Título	Contenido	Palabras claves	Me gusta	Compartido	Ctios.	Menciones
Mie 15/10	17:14	Pedro Presidente	Foto Bordaberry con texto	Pedro-Presidente, Experiencia-para-gobernar,	1,718	267	231	0

Publicación con mayor alcance Partido Nacional (09-10 al 16-10) *



58.615 Me gustan

<https://www.facebook.com/LuisLacallePouOficial>

Día	Hora	Título	Contenido	Palabras claves	Me gusta	Compartido	Ctios.	Menciones
Sab 11/10	17:14	Caravana	Álbum de fotos (9) caravana	Montevideo, caravana	5,383	396	723	49

*Datos de publicación mas gustada relevados el 18/10

4

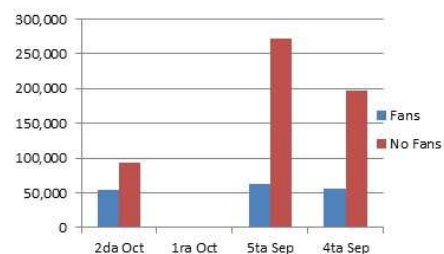
Publicaciones con mayor alcance Frente Amplio (25-09 al 16-10)

Cuentas alcanzadas y tipo de usuario para los contenidos de mayor alcance

Cuentas alcanzadas



Conexión con la cuenta con la página (Fans)



Semana	Día	Hora Publica	Título	Alcance Cuentas	Fans	No Fans	Me gusta	Compartido	Comentarios	Cuentas mención
2da Oct	Vie 16/10	18:10	Xavier presentará denuncia de papeletas apócrifas	154,112 *	55,14	92,998	3,905	3,773	411	15
1ra Oct	Mie 8/10	08:14	Para el NO, no existe papeleta	339,072	-	-	10,760	6,008	736	45
5ta Sep	Jue 02/10	09:11	Para algunos es el Nelson Mandela de América Latina	335,488	62,848	272,640	21,286	4,654	2,098	9
4ta Sep	Sab 27/09	20:47	El futuro se construye con amor!	252,544	55,552	196,992	16,804	2,268	602	61

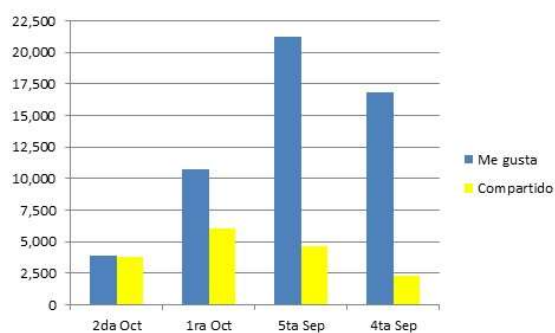
* Pequeña diferencia entre datos obtenidos

5

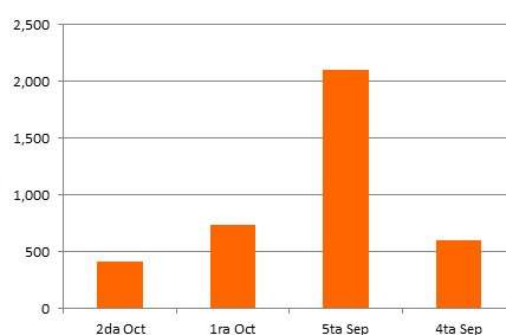
Publicaciones con mayor alcance Frente Amplio (25-09 al 16-10)

Me gustan, compartidos y comentarios para los contenidos de mayor alcance

Cantidad de me gusta y compartidos por contenido



Comentarios



Semana	Día	Hora Publica	Título	Alcance Cuentas	Fans	No Fans	Me gusta	Compartido	Comentarios	Cuentas mención
2da Oct	Vie 16/10	18:10	Xavier presentará denuncia de papeletas apócrifas	154,112	55,104	92,992	3,905	3,773	411	15
1ra Oct	Mie 8/10	08:14	Para el NO, no existe papeleta	339,072	-	-	10,760	6,008	736	45
5ta Sep	Jue 02/10	09:11	Para algunos es el Nelson Mandela de América Latina	335,488	62,848	272,640	21,286	4,654	2,098	9
4ta Sep	Sab 27/09	20:47	El futuro se construye con amor!	252,544	55,552	196,992	16,804	2,268	602	61

* Finaliza el 2 Oct

6

Detalles de publicaciones con mayor alcance del Frente Amplio (25-09 al 16-10)

Semana	Día	Hora Publica	Titulo	Contenido	Ideas claves en texto
2da Oct	Vie 16/10	18:10	Xavier presentará denuncia de papeletas apócrifas	Imagen: papeleta apócrifa por el No a la baja con texto rojo cruzado 'FALSA'	Mónica-Xavier, Corte-Electoral, denuncia-papeletas-apócrifas, Recordamos-no-hay-papeletas-por-el-No, No-A-La-Baja
1ra Oct	Mie 8/10	08:14	Para el NO, no existe papeleta	Imagen (Placa azul): con colibríes y texto del No a la baja	No-A-La-Baja, No-pongas-papeleta, inseguridad-la-empeora, condenando-a-los-jóvenes
5ta Sep*	Jue 02/10	09:11	Para algunos es el Nelson Mandela de América Latina	Foto: Mujica frontal, sentado manos tomadas sobre mesa. Link Nota: publicada por presidencia sobre reportaje realizado por The Guardian	Mujica, Nelson-Mandela, América-Latina, 13-años-preso, ideas-socioliberales, redujo-pobreza, achicó-desigualdad, economía-creciera, The-Guardian, gobierno-de-Uruguay
4ta Sep	Sab 27/09	20:47	El futuro se construye con amor!	Fotos: Varias Multitud Marcha por la Diversidad	Ni-un-voto-a-la-discriminación, derechos-no-se-bajan, Diversidad

* Finaliza el 2 Oct

7

Comparativo de contenidos con otros partidos (09-10 al 16-10)*

Imagen: Si 	Imagen: No	Imagen: Si 	Imagen: Si
Me gusta/Compartidos 1.0	Me gusta/Compartidos 5.0	Me gusta/Compartidos 6.4	Me gusta/Compartidos 13.6
Mención otras cuentas: Si	Mención otras cuentas: Si	Mención otras cuentas: No	Mención otras cuentas: Si
Temas: No a la baja, denuncia papeletas apócrifas	Temas: Cierres de campaña Florida, Maldonado, Rocha	Temas: Experiencia para gobernar	Temas: Fotos demostración de gran caravana

* Basado en datos de las páginas abiertos al público

8

Appendix III Consent Form for Research Participants



CIM - University of Warwick Consent Form for Research Participants of Digital Economies and the public study

This Research Participant Consent Form is to be used for the doctoral research project titled Digital Economies and the Public carried out by Esteban Damiani and supervised by Dr Nathaniel Tkacz and Professor Celia Lury at the Centre of Interdisciplinary Methodologies (CIM) of The University of Warwick in the UK.

The research is aimed at understanding the dynamics of content valuation and evaluation of online interactions and contents on Facebook and Twitter in the specific context of political campaigns of the 2014 presidential elections in Uruguay. The project proposes to interview social media users and collaborate with members of staff participating in the campaign of Frente Amplio.

Interviews and collaboration with members of the party will be conducted as part of this research project funded by the ESRC and directed by Professor Celia Lury. The answers or another type of material provided during the dialogues with the researcher may be used and submitted only for academic reasons at the end of 2016. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. Similarly, I can request to have some of my responses excluded from any interview's recording. Information provided during the interviews and the research process might be published, but any personal details will not be published. Any personal information will be treated with absolutely confidentiality and anonymised before used or transcribed into other formats. My real name might be published only if I am previously informed about the content to be published and I provide a separate and specific authorisation for this. I understand that academic supervisors at the University of Warwick may need to look at some of the information provided during of the interviews, but that my name and any personal details will not be shared.

By signing this consent form below, I confirm that the project specified above has been explained to me by a member of the research team and I had the opportunity to ask questions and receive a clear response. I have understood the nature of the study and I agree to take part in the research project and be interviewed by the researcher. For any further queries regarding this study please contact Professor Celia Lury by email (C.Lury@warwick.ac.uk) or the CIM's offices at the University of Warwick by telephone at +44 02476151758.

Do you agree to allow the interview to be audio-recorded?

Yes ☐ No ☐

_____ Participant's Name	_____ Date	_____ Signature
_____ Esteban Damiani Researcher's Name	_____ Date	_____ Signature

Data collected during the interview can only be used if the form is signed by the research participant. The original form will be kept by the researcher for the project records and a copy will be given to the research participant.

Appendix IV Project Information sheet for Research Participants



Information sheet for the Doctoral Research on Digital Economies and the public at the Centre of Interdisciplinary Methodologies

You are invited to take part in the doctoral research study titled Digital Economies and the Public conducted by Mr Esteban Damiani and supervised by Dr Nathaniel Tkacz and Professor Celia Lury. The study is part of a three years academic project funded by the British Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and directed by Professor Celia Lury at the Centre of Interdisciplinary Methodologies (CIM) in The University of Warwick. Before taking part in this project, we would like to ask you to read this brief research description and make any questions that you might have related to the project.

The aim of this project is to analyse Facebook and Twitter as spaces for measuring, valuation and evaluation of online interactions in the specific context of 2014 Uruguayan presidential campaigns. The political campaign is considered by the project as a complex process in which there is a need of engaging and understanding a diverse audience who are increasingly using social media. This national political context creates a especial occasion where measuring interactions, reactions and trends becomes of especial interest for multiple actors.

The study recognises the obvious political component involved in the research topics, but it is subscribed to the fields of sociology and digital media studies. The main interest of the research is to understand the role that devices for counting, categorising and sorting online activities plays in the dynamics of digitally mediated interactions of the political community associated with the Frente Amplio.

The project decides to take a supporting position with the Frente Amplio, but clearly specified that it will remain total independent in the process of conducting a sociological analysis and submitting the research results as doctoral thesis between the end of 2016 and first half of 2017. The researcher's participation in online campaigning might become relevant observations for the study and used for analysing the dynamics of content valuation on Twitter and Facebook

We would like to interview you and comment with you the production and valuation and content produced on Twitters accounts and Facebook's groups and pages directly associated with The Frente Amplio's campaign. There is no a specific set of questions and length that is required for your participation. Rather than using a questionnaire with pre-established questions, we propose and open dialog that might take place in a single meeting or in several

occasions. The aspects to be discussed are not pre-settled, but mainly related to: the different forms in which you use Facebook and Twitter, your views on the specificities of these sites, the different possibility that they provided for engaging with others and understanding their positions and how the constant and open generation of contents and information related the online activities may influence the relationship among you and different types of Twitter and Facebook users. Your participation in this project is voluntary and you can withdraw from it at any time without giving any reason. Similarly, you can request to have some of your responses excluded from any notes or recording. The information provided during the research process may be published, but any personal details will be treated with absolutely confidentiality and data anonymised before used or transcribed into other formats.

To avoid any type of conflicts of interests and ethical issues related to the political campaign, the project will work and collaborate with members of the party Frente Amplio only. The researcher looks at the project as an opportunity to participate in the digital campaign and collaborate with campaign staff to understand the dynamics and multiple possible interpretations of the online interactions on Facebook and Twitter. The study suggests an opportunity for rethinking the use of these social media and analysing the nature of online indicators and the emergence of specific types of social interactions.

By signing this information sheet below, I confirm that the project specified above has been explained to me by a member of the research team and I had the opportunity to ask questions and receive a clear response. For any further queries regarding this study please contact the main project researcher, Mr. Esteban Damiani, by telephone on +44 07904797913 or email E.Damiani@warwick.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can contact the research supervisor Professor Celia Lury by email (C.Lury@warwick.ac.uk) or the CIM's offices at the University of Warwick by telephone at +44 02476151758.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
Participant's Name	Date	Signature

Appendix V Recording Consent Form



University of Warwick
Recording Consent Form



Doctoral Research on Digital Economies and the Public at the Centre of Interdisciplinary Methodologies

By signing below, I consent and permit the University of Warwick's PhD student Esteban Damiani to take photographs and make an audio recording or video for research project Digital Economies and the Public. If I provide consent and the researcher considers that photographs and/or recordings, I confirm that I have agreed that the researcher and the University may publish the recorded, photographed content for academic purposes or any other non-commercial professional manner that the University reasonably believes is proper, including print, audio, video and digital publications.

I understand that the copyright in the pictures and recordings will belong to the University and that the University will not attempt to exercise any rights over the ideas or content of any presentation or other materials I present, and I will not receive payment or any other compensation in connection with the pictures and recordings.

I acknowledge that I have had a chance to discuss this form with the researcher and where I have asked questions I have received complete answers to my questions.

I hereby release the University of Warwick from any and all liability that may or could arise from the taking or use of the pictures, audio and or any content associated.

I give my consent for (please mark the relevant option):

☐ The University of Warwick to make a recording for any permitted use

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Postcode: _____

Mobile number or email address: _____

Appendix VI

Images used by Facebook supporters of Frente Amplio.

A) Images related to Lacalle Pou and his acrobatic figure using a street sign post.



